WITH COLOURED PLATE.

Distingue

FOR ALL WEATHERS AND ALL WEARERS.

WATERPROOF.

In cold weather it ... as a Mantle. To rain ... it offers absolute defiance. ... the disagreeable ... ordinary macintosh. Perfection of Style and ... charming patterns. ... Waterproof Mantle. ... from leading Drapers, Mantle Houses, Clothiers, &c.

(Be careful to ask for "The Distingue.")

FOR LADIES AND GENTLEMEN.

PEARSON'S CHRISTMAS NUMBER.

"The Distingue"

FOR ALL WEATHERS AND ALL WEARERS.

WATERPROOF.

If you desire a Waterproof guaranteed to give thorough satisfaction, look for "The Distingue" Silk Label.

To be had from leading Drapers, Mantle Houses, Clothiers, &c.

(Be careful to ask for "The Distingue.")

Retailers can obtain their supplies from the principal Wholesale Warehousemen in the United Kingdom.

FOR LADIES AND GENTLEMEN.

THREE PENCE.] CHRISTMAS, 1894. [THREE PENCE.

"STRONGEST & BEST."—*Health.*

Fry's PURE CONCENTRATED COCOA

90 Prize Medals Awarded to the Firm.

Purchasers should ask especially for FRY'S PURE CONCENTRATED COCOA, to distinguish it from other varieties manufactured by the Firm.

THE SOAP FOR HARD WATER — THE SOAP FOR SOFT WATER

LATHERS FREELY in the HARDEST WATER

WATSON'S MATCHLESS CLEANSER

A HOUSEHOLD REQUISITE

LARGEST SALE of 1d. TABLETS in the WORLD

THE SOAP FOR HOT WATER — THE SOAP FOR COLD WATER

FOR CHRISTMAS & NEW YEAR'S PRESENTS.

MILWARD'S NEEDLE CASES.

Invaluable for Failing Sight.

The Wonderful Calyx-Eyed Needles.

Sample Packets, 8d. each.

Post Free from the Works,

WASHFORD MILLS, REDDITCH.

One little bottle of Norton's Pills
Is not guaranteed to cure all ills,
But one little bottle, beyond all question,
Will thoroughly conquer Indigestion!

100 Years' Reputation as an Unequalled Remedy for Indigestion, Headache, Biliousness, Debility, Stomach and Liver Complaints. Splendid Tonic. Gentle Aperient. Mild in operation, Absolutely Safe, and Free from Injurious Drugs. An Unfailing Remedy.

NORTON'S

Trade Mark—One Little Bottle.

For STOMACH and LIVER. Ask for "NORTON'S CAMOMILE PILLS," and do not take a substitute. Bottles, 1/1½, 2/9, and 11/- of all Medicine Vendors. Prepared by Norton's, Limited, 21, Spital Sq., London, E.

"JOCKEY CLUB" SARDINES

ARE THE BEST.

SOLD BY ALL GROCERS AND STORES.

SPECIAL BOXES OF 12 TINS.

Packers: ARSENE SAUPIQUET, NANTES, FRANCE.

Wholesale: C. L. LAMARE, 69, EASTCHEAP, LONDON, E.C.

THE LIDS ROLL OFF BY TURNING THE KEY.

BIRD'S CUSTARD POWDER

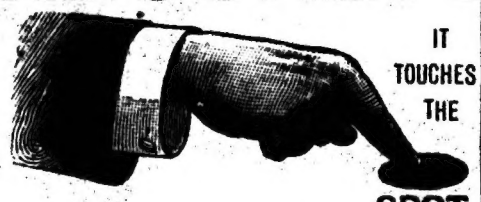
Enjoyed by Young and Old.

Provides not only Delicious Custard, but an endless variety of delightful dainty dishes.

NO EGGS! NO TROUBLE!

HOMOCEA CURES!

Why?



IT TOUCHES THE SPOT.

Use for Piles, Skin Diseases, Burns, Cuts, Sores, Toothache, Bruises, Chilblains, &c., &c.

Of all Chemists, price 1s. 1½d. and 2s. 9d. per box, or free by post for Fifteen or Thirty-six Stamps. P.O. preferred. The HOMOCEA Co., 21, Hamilton Square, Birkenhead.

HOOPER, Chemist, 43, King William Street, London Bridge, SELLS IT.

TRADE MARK REGISTERED.

Rimmel's Toilet Vinegar

Has for over HALF A CENTURY sustained its HIGH REPUTATION as an Indispensable Toilet Requisite. Delightfully Refreshing to the Skin.

RIMMEL'S Specialities for the Toilet, Perfumes, Soaps, Powders, &c.

EUGENE RIMMEL, LTD. (Perfumers to H.R.H. The Princess of Wales), call Special Attention to their

CHOICE AND VARIED COLLECTION OF

Christmas and New Year's Goods

IN GREAT VARIETY, FANCY SCENT CASES, CHRISTMAS BOXES, SACHETS, &c.

SOLD EVERYWHERE.

Caution.—Note Name and Trade Mark on all Goods, and beware of imitations.

96, STRAND; 180, REGENT STREET; 64, CHEAPSIDE, LONDON; AND PARIS.

All Communications respecting Advertisements should be sent to the Advertisement Department, "PEARSON'S WEEKLY" Offices, HENRIETTA STREET, LONDON, W.C.

THERE IS NOTHING NEW UNDER THE

BUT !!

A NEW USE

FOR AN OLD AND

UNIVERSAL SANITARY REMEDY.

THE ELEPHANT

TOSSED IT OFF

LIKE A MAN

The Prompt Mother of Useful Knowledge NECESSITY; Its best Use WISDOM

"I have just received a letter from a friend (a Military Chaplain) in India, who relates the following anecdote. A police officer and some friends were out tiger shooting in the Jungle (N.W.P.) with several elephants. One elephant was taken seriously ill, and they did not know what to give it or what to do with it. A young officer said *he* always took ENO'S 'FRUIT SALT' when he felt bad, and it always did him good. 'Well,' they said, 'have you got any?' 'Yes. I have a new bottle.' 'Well, fetch it.' So the ENO'S 'FRUIT SALT' was brought, and in imitation it was decided to give the elephant a dose. So they emptied the whole bottle into a pail of water and stirred it up, and the elephant tossed it off like a man, and was soon after all right.

"I have myself derived great benefit from ENO'S 'FRUIT SALT,' and feeling sure the above will interest you,—I remain, Dear Sir, yours faithfully, JUNGLE.—BLACKHEATH, July.

AT HOME: MY HOUSEHOLD GOD. ABROAD: MY "VADE MECUM."

A GENERAL OFFICER, writing from Ascot on Jan. 2, 1886, says:—"Blessings on your 'FRUIT SALT'! I trust it is not profane to say so, but, in common parlance, I swear by it. It stands the cherished bottle on the chimneypiece of my sanctum, my little idol—at home, my household god; abroad, my *vade mecum*. Think not this the rhapsody of a hypochondriac. It is only the outpouring of a grateful heart. The fact is, I am, in common I daresay with numerous old fellows of my age (67), now and then troubled with a tiresome liver; whenever, however, do I use your cheery remedy, then exit pain—'Richard is himself again!' So highly do I value your composition, that, when taking it, I grudge even the little sediment that remains at the bottom of the glass. I give, therefore, the following advice to those wise persons who have learned to appreciate its inestimable benefits:—

"When 'ENO'S SALT' betimes you take,
No waste of this elixir make;
But drain the dregs, and lick the cup,
Of this the perfect pick-me-up.

"Jan. 2, 1886. To Mr. J. C. Eno."

Writing again on Jan. 24, 1888, he adds: "Dear Sir,—A year or two ago I addressed you in grateful recognition of the never-failing virtues of your world-famed remedy. The sentiment in the same strain now salutes you with the following:—

"When time, who steals our years away,
Shall steal our pleasures too;
ENO'S FRUIT SALT will prove our stay,
And still our health renew."

HEADACHE AND DISORDERED STOMACH.—"After suffering for nearly two and a half years from severe headache and disordered stomach, and after trying almost everything and spending much money without finding any benefit, I was recommended by a friend to try your 'FRUIT SALT,' and before I had finished one bottle I found it doing me a great good, and now I am restored to my usual health, and others I know that have tried it have not enjoyed such good health for years. Yours most truly,

"ROBERT HUMPHREYS, Post Office, Barrasford."

DRAWING AN OVERDRAFT ON THE BANK OF LIFE.—Excitement, feverish colds, chills, fevers, blood poisons, throat irritation, &c., late hours, fagged, unnatural excitement, heated impure air, too rich food, alcoholic drink, gouty, rheumatic, and other blood poisons, influenza, sleeplessness, biliousness, sick headache, skin eruptions, pimples on the face, want of appetite, sourness of stomach, &c. Use ENO'S "FRUIT SALT." It prevents diarrhœa, and removes it in the early stages. It is pleasant, cooling, health-giving, refreshing, and invigorating.

The value of ENO'S "FRUIT SALT" cannot be told. Its success in Europe, Asia, Africa, America, and Australia proves it.

CAUTION.—Examine each bottle, and see that the capsule is marked "ENO'S FRUIT SALT." Without it you have been imposed on by a worthless and occasionally poisonous imitation.

Sold by all Chemists.

Prepared only at ENO'S "FRUIT SALT" WORKS, London, S.E., by J. C. Eno's Patent

---

SMOKE THE CELEBRATED

"PIONEER"

SWEETENED TOBACCO.

KNOWN ALL OVER THE WORLD.

MANUFACTURED BY THE

RICHMOND CAVENDISH CO., LTD.

AT THEIR BONDED WORKS, LIVERPOOL,

And Retailed by all First-Class Tobacconists at Home and Abroad.

PATRONISED BY ROYALTY.

5,000 SILK UMBRELLAS at 2/6 each.

Direct from the Manufacturer.

THE 'PARKER' UMBRELLA

Registered. Ladies' or Gents' Plain or Twilled Silk. (Parker's Hollow Ribbed Frames); carved and mounted handles, [illegible] 2/6 or 30 stamps. List and Testimonials free. Re-covering neatly done, plain or twilled silk, Ladies' or Gent's, 2/6 each. Returned next post.

J. E. PARKER, Umbrella Works, Brown Close, Sheffield.

---

30 YEARS' SUCCESS AMONG THE DEAF.

The Rev. E. J. SILVERTON, Specialist, of Imperial Buildings, Ludgate Circus, London, will be happy to send his book on the Ear, "How to Cure without the Use of Instruments, or Operation." Price 6d. Sufferers from Deafness, Noises, or Discharges in the Ears, should obtain this work, or call or write to Mr. Silverton's Consulting Rooms. Free Consultations daily from 11 till 4. Saturdays, 11 till 1. Wonderful cases:—A person cured after 40 years' deafness, and one at the age of 84. A gentleman after 17 years' deafness cured. A remarkable case of a lady at Grimsby substantiated by a Clergyman. Addresses on application. All communications as above.

SILK HANDKERCHIEFS.

GREAT REDUCTIONS.

Having had another large Consignment of Pure White CHINA SILK HANDKERCHIEFS, will forward the HALF-DOZEN for 6s., or Sample Handkerchiefs, 1s. 3d., carriage paid. Money returned in full if not approved of. These Handkerchiefs have been bought at 40 per cent. under the usual wholesale prices, and they are sold retail at 2s. 11d. each. Size 22in. square. J. HUTT, WHOLESALE WAREHOUSE, ASHTON NEW ROAD, MANCHESTER.

Dr. MACKENZIE'S CATARRH CURE SMELLING BOTTLE.

Cures Cold in the Head, cures Nervous Headache, instantly relieves Hay Fever and Neuralgia in the Head, is the best remedy for Faintness and Dizziness.

Sold by all Chemists and Stores.

Price ONE SHILLING

Post-free 15 stamps, from MACKENZIE'S Cure Depot, Reading.

Refuse worthless imitations.

MRS. JACKSON

An artist's wife, residing at Norton, near Malton, states:—"No words can express my gratitude to you for the good received through taking your Wind Pills. For a long time I suffered severely from

INDIGESTION, SPASMS,

and LIVER COMPLAINT. The doctors gave me up as incurable, nor did I think it possible for me to recover. I scarcely dared to eat any food, fearing suffocation. Seeing an advertisement of

PAGE WOODCOCK'S WIND PILLS,

I resolved to try them. After taking a few small boxes I lost all the painful symptoms, and now enjoy good health. I feel I owe my life to you."

All Sufferers from INDIGESTION, LIVER COMPLAINTS, WIND on the STOMACH, COSTIVENESS, SICK HEADACHE, NERVOUS DEBILITY, BILIOUSNESS, &c., should avail themselves of this most excellent medicine.

Of all Medicine Vendors, 1s. 1½d. and 2s. 9d.

PINK'S PERFECT PEPPER

THE

Perfection of Ground Pepper in

2, 4, and 8oz. Registered Tins.

All Communications respecting Advertisements should be sent to the Advertisement Department, "PEARSON'S WEEKLY" Offices, HENRIETTA STREET, LONDON, W.C.

PEARSON'S Extra CHRISTMAS NUMBER.

A MERRY CHRISTMAS.] CHRISTMAS, 1894. [A HAPPY NEW YEAR.

By HEADON HILL.

I. The Divination of the Afghan Kukhri.

THIS is not, properly speaking, a "detective story," although it deals with the detection of crime past and crime contemplated; that is to say, there is here no impressive professional detective marching straight to his goal through a labyrinth of scientific deduction. There is here only common animal instinct, existing in a rather low type of human nature, and utilised more or less by chance for the elucidation of the central incident. The subsequent stories of this series will fall more aptly under the popular definition, because they will narrate the achievements of Kala Persad after he was brought to England to exercise his gift under the auspices of a professional agency. But still, in these later cases, it will be found that reason had very little to do with the successes which marked his career in London.

The mixture of serpentine carriage drive and tangled brake that did duty as the Collector's garden stood out clear and distinct to minutest detail under the full moon. Beyond the compound wall twinkled the lights of the Cantonment bungalows, and further afield irregular purple blotches on the sky-line showed where the Purundhur hills limited the horizon. Out of the unseen distances came the sounds of the Indian night. Now and again a hyena laughed; then a jackal would howl from the waste land at the back of the police barracks; and at the little village down by the *ghat*, a mile away, some worthy was beating a tom-tom with zeal that never tired.

In the verandah of the Collector's bungalow, looking out over the garden, hung a row of oil lamps suspended by silver chains, and under the central lamp outside the dining-room a wicker table stood, flanked by a few Bombay lounge chairs. Presently the tatty that veiled the window was drawn aside, and two men came out and sat down. The elder of the two—a man of forty-five—was very tall, with a pair of dreamy blue eyes and pale thin features, set off by a drooping fair moustache. His manner was marked by an air of boredom, or it might have been after-dinner sleepiness, that was barely kept in check by traditional Anglo-Indian hospitality. This was John Ames, Collector of the District, and wielder of more real power than many people with ten times as imposing titles. His guest, Mark Poignand, was a short dark young man of seven-and-twenty, correctly dressed in evening clothes, and with a style of up-to-date smartness that betokened him not long in the country. As a matter of fact he had arrived from England by the previous mail, and was dining with the Collector as the result of a letter of introduction.

He caught sight of a movement among the shadows.

Till the red-turbaned *khansamah* who brought coffee and cheroots had disappeared round the corner of the verandah, Poignand chattered the "society" jargon which had formed the staple of his conversation during dinner. Then the two sat in silence for a minute, listening to the jackals and the tom-tom, and at length Ames said:

"I presume, Mr. Poignand, by your bringing me a letter of introduction from Lord Dingwall, that there is some special way in which I can serve you. Since you are staying with your friends, the Merwoods, I cannot very well offer to put you up here, otherwise I should have been delighted."

Poignand shifted his leg uneasily, and for once was unready of reply. This was the opening for which he had been waiting—which he had come half round the world to seek—but now that it was thrust upon him unawares, he hardly knew how to take it. "You are right," he said at length. "Having friends, or, rather, connections, in Sholapur, I should not have troubled you with a letter of introduction were there not a special reason. Dingwall thought your aid would be invaluable. To tell you the truth, I am here more or less in a detective capacity."

The Collector smiled coldly. "Nothing of a political nature, I hope? Perhaps I am the object of your kind attentions? You had better understand from the start that we are not very partial out here to persons sent from home on that sort of errand."

"My business is entirely private and unofficial," Poignand hastened to reassure him; and, bending nearer him, added: "I am told you are on terms of some intimacy with Major and Mrs. Merwood. Are you aware that in the course of the last two months at least two attempts have been made on my cousin's life?"

The Collector looked sharply at his guest, as though beginning to doubt his sanity. "My dear Mr. Poignand," he said; "surely you have got hold of a mare's nest? The Merwoods, as you know, are my nearest neighbours; their compound adjoins mine. Recking of *gup*, as this place is, it would be nearly impossible for such a thing to happen without my hearing of it within the hour. If you knew anything of our life here you would not expect me to believe that news travels from one bungalow to another *viâ* England and an Indian Secretary."

"Nevertheless it has apparently done so in this case," replied Poignand, calmly. "Two months ago Mrs. Merwood was startled in the night by hearing a sound in her bedroom, and awoke in time to see the figure of a man disappearing through the French window on to the verandah. She aroused her husband, who sleeps in an adjoining and communicating room, and, although he treated the incident as tending to robbery rather than violence, he promptly searched the grounds, without, however, finding a trace of any lurker. A fortnight later, my cousin Lucy, who had followed her husband's example in treating the matter as of no importance, and had adopted his suggestion that she should say nothing about it, was disturbed by the fall of a china bowl in her bedroom at two in the morning. This time the nature of the intrusion was more clearly defined. Again Mrs. Merwood saw the outline of a flying figure, gliding, not as before, directly into the verandah, but into her husband's room, with the object, as she presumed, of escaping through his French window instead of through her own. She leaped from the bed and followed into the Major's room, but quick as she was she was too slow to catch sight of the fugitive. Her husband was sleeping soundly, but on being aroused he made a tour of the premises, with no better result than before. While he was thus engaged my cousin returned to her own room, and thereupon made the discovery which placed the affair in such a serious light. On the floor, close to the fragments of the broken bowl, she found an Afghan knife—*kukhri* I think you call it—which she recognised as one of a collection of weapons hanging on the wall of her husband's sleeping apartment. The impression she immediately formed was that her intending assailant had entered by the same way he had left—through Major Merwood's bedroom—and had armed himself from the trophy *en route*."

He rose with as much dignity as a man of his type could assume.

Poignand stopped and seemed to wait for comment; but the Collector merely vouchsafed a half contemptuous "Well?"

The narrator proceeded: "On this occasion, as on the last, Merwood exerted himself to allay his wife's alarm, promising at the same time to leave no stone unturned to get to the bottom of the mystery. To assist his endeavours in this direction he enjoined upon her the most absolute secrecy—an injunction, which, judging by your ignorance of the matter, has been pretty closely kept to. My cousin, however, did not consider herself debarred from writing home to her mother a full account of what had occurred, and it is in consequence of fears excited among the family that I have come to look after my relative. My aunt, who is a personal friend of Lord Dingwall, thought it as well to enlist his influence on my behalf—hence the letter of introduction which I had the pleasure of presenting yesterday."

Poignand's concluding tones showed that he had come to the end of the narrative of facts, and that he desired Ames to take up the running by promulgating theories. Whatever may have been in the Collector's mind it became clear that he had no intention of allowing his hand to be forced that way. Tossing the stump of his cheroot among the shrubs he deliberately lighted another before he replied:

"You must pardon my saying that even now I don't quite see your position. Accepting all you have told me as gospel, I would ask: Does it not strike you—does it not strike the family—that the right person to manage the affair is the lady's husband? There is no man in the station more capable of doing so, seeing that he is a

[*All Rights Reserved.*]

Cantonment Magistrate, and knows every *budmash* for miles round. Have you come out vaguely—trusting to your own acumen to succeed where Major Merwood, with all his facilities, has failed? Or are you moved by some definite suspicion?"

The last plain question told Poignand that his host was too strong a man to allow him to shift the burden of making the first charge. He came to the point at once. "My cousin's friends have come to the conclusion that it is Major Merwood himself who has designs upon her life," he said, lowering his voice to a whisper, and glancing to the right and left.

He had scarcely spoken when his fear of being overheard caused him to utter an exclamation of alarm; for he caught sight of a movement among the shadows at the end of the verandah. Ames, on the point of making some reply suitable to the gravity of the accusation, could not repress a smile as he followed the direction of Poignand's glance. To the new arrival the gaunt up-standing figure, dodging here and there in the blended lamp and moon light, seemed distinctly human, and therefore pregnant with infinite possibilities for spreading scandal.

"Pshaw!" said the Collector; "there is nothing there to alarm you. It is only my tame ape, Gobind, a fine specimen I brought from the Nilgiris last hot weather. He is chained up there to act as housewatchman. The natives worship monkeys and give him a wide berth accordingly."

He stopped, as if glad of the diversion that had saved him the obligation of immediate reply to the grave communication, but Poignand, having taken the plunge, had lost much of his diffidence. "Do you think there is anything in this theory of ours?" he asked.

"I think there is a good deal in it," said Ames. "I think there is in it about the most egregious folly that ever entered into the mind of man. With whom did it originate? With you, I suppose, seeing that you are the active deputy of the others?"

He spoke hastily, and with some annoyance, and in proportion to the growth of the languid man's heat the natural assurance of his guest reasserted itself. Poignand smiled exasperatingly as he replied: "Yes, it was my notion first, but the rest saw it in the same light. You will not be so ready with your adjectives, Mr. Ames, when you hear my reasons. There are circumstances which tend to confirm our view."

The hunted man was kneeling at his feet.

"They must be very strong circumstances to convince me," was the reply. "I tell you frankly, that had not Lord Dingwall committed you and your precious enterprise to my keeping, I should, at once, inform Major Merwood of the nature of your errand. As it is, I shall, most certainly, do nothing to facilitate an outrage on an honourable man. What are these circumstances to which you refer?"

Poignand stared at his host in some surprise. The concluding question seemed out of keeping with the refusal to aid, and he began to suspect the Collector of wishing to obtain material for putting Major Merwood on his guard. He rose with as much dignity as a man of his type could assume, saying at the same time:

"You have plainly indicated a determination not to move in the matter; I have nothing to complain of in that, but, since you withhold your assistance, you must pardon my saying that the reasons which prompt us have no concern for you."

At his guest's evident intention to depart the Collector rose also. As the two men stood facing each other voices reached them from the drive, and, at the same moment, there sauntered into view a man and a woman, the latter chatting vivaciously, and laughing as she came. The lady—who had something of a white fleecy fabric thrown over her head and shoulders—was young and slim, while her companion was a portly and rather reserved-looking man of middle age.

"Here are the Merwoods come to fetch you," exclaimed Ames, recognising the occupants of the next bungalow. "The devoted couple whom you suspect of internecine intentions."

"That is hardly the word for it, considering that the attempt, if any, was a one-sided one," replied Poignand, puzzled at something like a covert sneer in the words.

The Collector turned to greet the newcomers, and it at once became apparent that the friendship between the neighbours was of a triangular nature. This was the first time that Poignand had seen them together, and he at once made the discovery that Mrs. Merwood did not like the Collector, that Major Merwood did, while Ames was cordial enough to both.

"We are not inclined to forgive you for capturing our guest on the second day of his visit," said Mrs. Merwood. "Please understand that there is a distinct coolness between us. And now, if you have quite done with Mark, we will take him home."

Ames accompanied the party to the gate and there bade them good-night, his manner to Poignand having in it a tone of veiled banter, which added to the latter's annoyance. The emissary of the "family" set such an extremely liberal valuation on his own by no means despicable abilities that he resented opposition to his views, and at once attributed either folly or motive to the opponent. The idea of Merwood's guilt had originated with him, and consequently, according to his notion, Ames must be a fool, or have some reason for pretending to entertain a contrary opinion. The Collector was not the man to impress anyone as a fool, and Poignand therefore accounted for his conduct by a friendly feeling towards the suspect.

The Merwoods' bungalow was almost a counterpart of the Collector's—a square one-storied structure with a verandah on three sides of it. Mrs. Merwood led the way into her drawing-room, and, aided by her husband, sought to win her relative back to good humour by asking his opinion on topics of the hour at home. It was plain from the young man's demeanour that his evening had not been a success, though, with the Collector's reputation for goodfellowship, neither of his entertainers could understand why. The fact was that Poignand felt ill at ease in the presence of those whom he was deceiving, and the more so since the rebuff to which he had exposed himself. His mind was so saturated with the secret suspicion that to-night he especially felt unable to talk naturally about any but the here doubly forbidden subject.

After an ineffectual effort at sustained conversation the party retired for the night, Poignand going straight to the bedroom allotted to him, an apartment opening on to the verandah which must have been traversed by Mrs. Merwood's midnight assailant. Without directly referring to the incident, he had contrived to gather this much from his cousin, and he had also noted the situation of the bedrooms occupied respectively by husband and wife. There was nothing in the information to shake or confirm the belief which had taken hold of him. The communicating rooms, each with its own exit on to the verandah, offered every facility for just such a crime as that he thought to trace home.

He undressed and threw himself on the bed—not to sleep, but to review the position. First his mind went back to the reason which had infected him with the germ of "detective fever," and which had appeared so cogent to Mrs. Merwood's mother that she had supplied the sinews of war for the expedition. The reason was a very simple one, and consisted of the discovery, picked up from a piece of stray club gossip, that before leaving England Major Merwood had insured his wife's life for £10,000. The marriage had been brought about after a short engagement during Merwood's last "leave," and had been regarded with mixed feelings by the relations of the bride, the Major having no resources beyond his Staff Corps pay. The family was, therefore, ripe for the theory which, in the excitement of getting himself listened to by a hitherto not always appreciative circle, Poignand so sedulously instilled. For the first time in his life the young man about town found himself charged with a definite commission.

The Merwoods received him pleasantly enough, and, if they felt it, contrived to conceal what would have been an excusable wonder that Mark could afford an Eastern tour on his modest income of £300 a year. No reference had been made to the nocturnal intrusions, and it was plain from the terms on which the couple were ostensibly living, that the first to resent her mother's interference would have been Mrs. Merwood herself. And now, as he tossed from side to side, Poignand saw that, with his ignorance of the country and with his lack of confidants, he was in a fair way to prove nothing. Ames' refusal to countenance his inquiries had cut the ground from under his feet.

The devotee with the tom-tom was still busy down by the *ghat*, and what with the unaccustomed din and his own chagrin, Poignand recognised that sleep was out of the question. The moon was high, and he decided upon taking a midnight stroll in the hope of returning refreshed and comforted. Slipping on some clothes he left the house by the verandah, and, skirting the low *chunam* wall that separated the Merwoods' from the Collector's garden, he passed through the entrance gates out on to the highway. The road stretched away white and deserted in the moonbeams, and having no special object in view he hesitated for a moment which way to take. The tom-tom decided for him. His cousin had accounted for the uncanny sounds by a festival that was being celebrated at a Hindoo shrine on the river bank. It struck him that the rites and orgies might divert him from his perplexity; so, turning his back on the Cantonment, he stepped briskly out in the direction of the unaccompanied drum-music.

A few minutes' walk brought him beyond the confines of the station to the open country, where the road ran out into the fair Deccan tableland between the well-irrigated greenery of grain and lucerne fields. Now and again a bullock-cart would plod by with creaking wheels, heavy laden with those close-huddled, white-swathed pilgrims of the night, who, on Indian highways, are always haunting the hours of darkness. Twice he was accosted with a cheerful "Ram-Ram, Sahib," by nocturnal pedestrians, who, receiving no answer to their salutations, spat heavily on the ground, and went their way. Then at a twist in the road, the rumble of the tom-tom grew louder, and he came in sight of the commotion by the *ghat* half a mile away. The flare of torches and the hum of many voices borne on the stillness of the night air told him that the festival was at its height, and soon the shapes of countless forms moving antlike across the fitful gleams were clearly visible.

Suddenly Poignand began to be conscious that the distant scene by the *ghat* was becoming blurred by several objects rapidly approaching him along the straight vista of road. As they came into fuller view, he perceived that the objects were men running, one being a few paces in advances of the others, but it was not till they were close upon him that he grasped the true meaning of the situation. The first comer was a fugitive pursued by the rest—a trio of as murderous looking cut-throats as ever practised Thuggism. Before Poignand could draw back or realise what was happening, the hunted man was kneeling at his feet, grasping him by the knees, and begging protection in such loudly triumphant broken English, that the enemy, seeing that they had a Sahib to deal with, vanished without more ado across the adjoining fields.

The whole episode was over in fifty seconds. It was a queer position for a man imbued with the ethics of London streets to find himself alone on an Indian high road at dead of night, with a wild-eyed, half-clad figure tightly clasping his legs, and calling him "Protector of the poor."

"Get up," said Poignand, after a while. "What's wrong with you? Those fellows have cleared out of sight."

"Ah, Sahib! They are bad Mahometan *budmash*," replied the fugitive, loosing his hold at last. "They thought to rob and kill Kala Persad on his way from the Pooja. It was foolish to go home all by self. They plenty devils, but they fly before strong arm of the Magnificency. The Sahib is my father and my mother."

Poignand grinned. He had never before been bespattered with stock Eastern compliments, and he was amused by the ineptness of the last. He who called himself Kala Persad was a little thin old man of at least sixty, whose silver-stubbled chin proclaimed that he must have been a grown man as far back as Mutiny days. The mainstay of his costume was a tattered blue tunic, through the folds of which, twisted round the lean, lithe waist, a dirty white cummerbund was visible. The pair of brown legs, thin almost as matchsticks, were entirely undraped, and the feet were also bare of all covering but their native leather. The face consisted for the most part of a mass of crowsfeet fighting for supremacy with the silver stubble, and of a pair of wonderful dark brown eyes, bloodshot and yellowed as to the rims, but with pupils that shone like the orbs of a cat in a coal-cellar. The whole was topped by a scanty wisp of red turban. Slung over the skimpy shoulders was a great close-meshed basket, which, judging by the ejaculations hurled at it by its owner, contained something of life.

"You mean, I suppose that, these men waylaid you because you are a Hindoo and they are Mahometans," said Poignand, who had heard of the creed jealousies between the followers of Islam and Brahma.

"The Sahib speaks true," replied Kala Persad, "but they only make excuse of being Mahometan at season of our Pooja, so they rob and kill. I am only a poor man, Sahib—a very poor *sampwallah* (snake-charmer). My business to go about barricks and give show to soldiers and Sahib-Log. So I learn to speak English. To-morrow I come to Sahib's bungalow and show snakes free for nothing. Thus will Kala Persad repay so great magnificence—that is"—spoken as an afterthought and with a glance of keenest import—"that is, if Sahib can spare time from big worry."

Poignand started. He had noticed the old man's eyes fixed on him curiously, but this diagnosis of his mental condition was a little too much. "What the devil do you mean?" he asked, roughly.

The weird being wheezed a laugh which must have had some curious effect on the occupants of his basket, for he shook them up angrily with a muttered "Chup rao" before he explained.

"Sahib," he said, "Kala Persad can read darker riddles than a man's face. In my own *gaum* in the hills below Mahabuleshwar my words were much sought by those who wish to learn secrets. When any person killed or bullock stolen"—he pronounced it ishtolen—"*patel* come to me and I give him *khabar* (news) of the bad man. Plenty people hanged in Tanna jail through Kala Persad's talk."

"How do you do it?" asked Poignand, shortly.

"Sinse, Sahib, common sinse," replied the old man; "what we call the plenty *malum*. My sinses very sharp, same like i-shnakes. My father was snake-charmer,

my grandfather snake-charmer—all snake-charmers for thousand years. People in *gaum* say we grow like snake ourself."

"Look here," said Poignand, struck by a sudden impulse. "There is a secret I want to find out. If I tell you the facts as far as I know them, leaving out the names, do you think you can read the puzzle? As a reward for saving you just now, you know?"

For answer Kala Persad moved to the roadside, beckoning Poignand to follow, then slipped the snake-basket to the ground. "Try me, Sahib," he said.

Without stopping to analyse the wisdom or otherwise of the course he was taking, Poignand plunged headlong into a narrative of the events that accounted for his presence in Sholapur. Adroitly hiding the identity of those interested, he told of the first alarm in his cousin's bedroom, of the second more serious one when the Afghan knife was found, and of the suspicions which had fallen on the husband. He went fully into the reasons which had moved him to this theory, and described the affectionate terms on which the pair were to outward appearance living. He even confided the rebuff which he had received from the "High Official" who was his friends' neighbour, and whose aid he had sought, repeating Ames' scornful utterances as faithfully as memory would permit, and alluding to the curiosity evinced by the Collector after withholding all assistance. Finally he wound up with a reference to the uneasiness which had caused him to leave his bed and so meet with the adventure in hand.

"If you can point me out the man who dropped that knife in the lady's room," he concluded, "I will give you a hundred rupees."

Kala Persad, who had listened with eyes downcast, as though tracing out on the struggling vegetation of the roadside the details related to him, raised his head, and looked at Poignand hesitatingly.

"There are one or two things I must know, Sahib, before I can give answer," he said. "Let us go back towards the city and talk as we go."

Something half-hearted and halting in his manner disappointed Poignand, who, without attaching any vast importance to the strange consultation, would have been better pleased by a prompt and positive indication of the criminal. That at least would have given him the excitement of trying to verify the snake-charmer's theory, but this temporising looked like a fizzle out of the boasted powers. However, he assented to the proposal, and retraced his steps towards the Cantonments, allowing the old man to shamble along by his side. Kala Persad asked two apparently irrelevant questions—one as to the lady's age, and another about the amount of light in her room—and Poignand inwardly fuming, was beginning to wonder what folly he would ask next, when an unusually long silence caused him to look askance at his companion. His eyes met nothing but thin air. Kala Persad had taken advantage of his preoccupation to slip away into the shadows of the night.

The next morning Poignand sat in the verandah of the Merwoods' bungalow cursing his luck, and the Collector, and every one, great and small, who in his opinion had thrown obstacles in the way of the attainment of his purpose. Above all did he curse Kala Persad for his behaviour of the previous night, inasmuch as the snake-charmer's defection had made a fool of him in his own eyes. This was an unpardonable offence, which the conviction that the old man had fled owing to a knowledge of his own incompetency quite failed to excuse. Though he would never have confessed it, Poignand was disgusted that he had either trusted to a broken reed, or had given away the secret of his mission to a charlatan who would blab it about the bazaars.

Major Merwood had gone to his office, and his cousin was busy housekeeping, so he had the verandah all to himself. This was the one bright spot on his horizon at present, for the effort of making himself agreeable to his hosts was becoming, under the circumstances, unbearable. As it was he was all afraid that his cousin suspected some sinister motive in his visit, and it would be a fatal error if his moodiness had the effect of putting Major Merwood on his guard.

The ape alighted on the top of its imaginary victim.

He was sitting on the side of the bungalow nearest to the Collector's, where the two gardens were separated by a low wall choked, and in many places hidden, by a mass of tangled undergrowth. In the intervening space the miniature jungle grew so thickly that only here and there through a break in the foliage was Ames' bungalow visible, while between this luxuriance and the verandah there was scarcely room for the drive and a few feet of flower border. Save for the hum of insects, and the chirrup of the little grey squirrels under the eaves, there was no sound of life near by.

Thus it was when suddenly there fell upon Poignand the sensation of being an object of interest to unseen human eyes. He looked this way and that along the deserted verandah, round at the windows, up the carriage-drive, in vain, and was beginning to think his instinct was at fault when his wandering gaze was arrested by a splash of red amid the green shrubbery in front. Looking closer he saw the face of Kala Persad enframed in a twining cotton bush on the edge of the drive, nodding and mouthing at him with an excitement that only lacked a foaming mouth to suggest possession by the Devil. Poignand's first impulse was to break into loud abuse, but, seeing the skinny hands held up for silence, he checked himself and went over to the shrubbery. The snake-charmer waited till he was within whisper-shot, then hissed like one of his own cobras: "Come with me, Sahib! Make no sound! I show you how *kukhri* get in Mem Sahib's room. You see everything, only must be quick."

He turned and glided into the bushes, to Poignand's intense astonishment, taking the direction of the Collector's compound wall. Determined not to lose sight of him till he had obtained some sort of satisfaction, the young man followed, making the best of his way through the interlacing growth, and striving to keep up with the sinuous form of his guide. Arrived at the dividing wall, Kala Persad made no halt, but gliding over the obstacle, continued his stealthy course through the shrubs of the Collector's garden. Not till he had gained the shelter of a bunch of feather-grass close to the bungalow did he pause, signing to Poignand to crouch beside him, and whispering:

"Look! Burra Sahib give lesson. Sahib can see how it was done."

Letting his eyes follow the direction of the brown forefinger Poignand saw a sight the true import of which his natural shrewdness was not slow to fathom. The cluster where they were concealed was close to the open window of the Collector's bedroom, and there a scene was being enacted which to an outsider would have meant nothing but eccentricity, but to the watchers spoke with terrible clearness of everything except motive. There were two occupants of the room—Ames and Gobind, the great grey ape of the hills, the same who had startled Poignand on the previous night. On the bed, in the centre of the room, a heap of clothes was disposed so as to resemble a human form, and upon this dummy man and monkey were, in turn, practising strange antics. First, Ames would go to a peg on the wall, and, taking down a long-bladed hunting knife, would steal softly to the bed and drive the weapon over and over again into the mound of clothes, the ape watching him intently the while. Then the Collector would replace the knife and go through the motions of escaping through the verandah, after which he would stand aside and motion Gobind forward. Horribly in earnest, the huge biped would imitate every motion his master had made, stealing across the room for the knife, approaching the bed, and using the long blade with unfaltering aim. Three times was the lesson repeated, and then an alteration was introduced. Just as Gobind was halfway to the bed in the fourth attempt Ames let a chair fall clattering to the ground. Immediately the ape sprang forward and alighted with one mighty bound on the top of its imaginary victim, handling the knife with what would have been most deadly effect.

"See, Sahib!" whispered Kala Persad. "Monkey not be frightened next time. Burrah Sahib teach him what do if Mem Sahib wake."

With all his cocksureness Poignand was very far from being a fool. He saw that this was a case of nailing his man to the evidence, or of as likely as not missing fire altogether. He stepped up to the window.

"Good morning, Mr. Ames," he said. "Thanks to your dress rehearsal, which I have just witnessed, my trip has not been quite so unproductive as you thought it would be."

Ames was not the man to go to pieces in the presence of his accuser. His complexion went perhaps a shade sallower, but he drew himself up to his full height, stared coolly at Poignand, and chided Gobind, who was gibbering strange noises at the interruption. Then he said, very slowly and as if weighing each word,

"You have the advantage of me and will take your own course. I shall take mine. In the meanwhile to prevent mistakes, and without prejudice, please understand that Gobind's intentions were not feminicidal, as you supposed, but homicidal. I should be sorry to have it go down that I could plan violence against a lady. Your statement last night that Mrs. Merwood thought she had been assailed came upon me as a surprise. I was under the impression that Gobind had learned his lesson better, but he must have made some stupid jumble about the rooms. It was a tour, you see, upon which he could not well be personally conducted beyond the edge of the verandah."

"I have a witness to your statement," said Poignand, pointing to Kala Persad, who stood mouthing at the window.

Poignand stepped from the room, beckoning the snake-charmer to follow. There was no need for any more creeping and crawling. "What made you watch him?" he asked, as they proceeded down the drive.

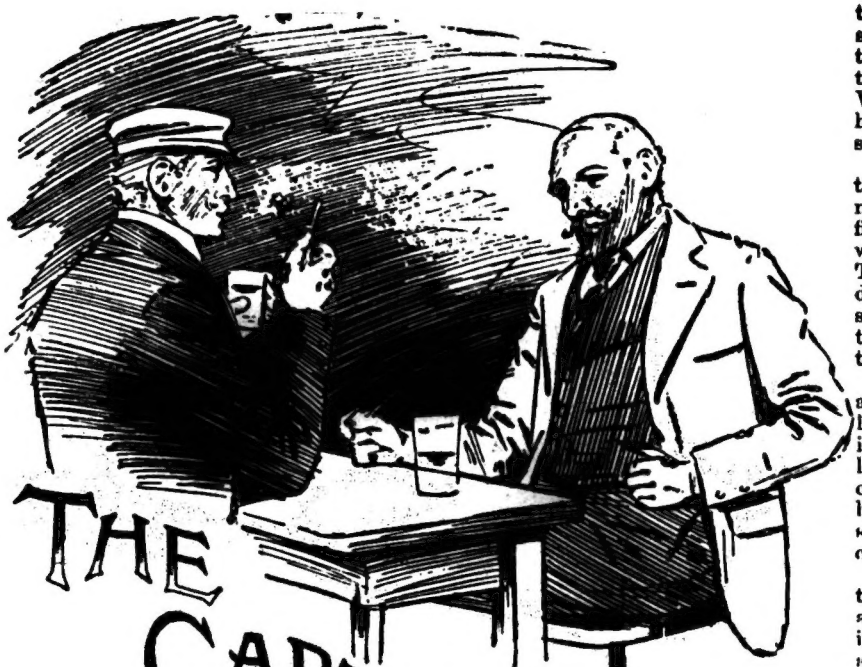
"Sahib," replied Kala Persad; "When bad man with no wife live next door good man with young wife, then suspect bad man if bobbery happen. When Kala Persad suspect, he watch—not know why, but always watch. That's the reason of sneak off last night, to follow Sahib, and find out Burra Sahib's name."

Before further questions could be put, two shots rang out in quick succession from the bungalow, and together they ran back, Poignand leading. He burst into the room he had left just as Ames' *khitmutghar* entered. Grasping a pistol in still twitching fingers, the Collector was lying stone dead across the body of the ape.

Mark Poignand was discreetly silent as to his having come out on purpose to look after his cousin, and allowed the Merwoods, at least, to suppose that he had stumbled on the secret by merest accident. Major Merwood had hoped to bring the attempt home to a notorious native robber of the district, and thought best to compass this end by lulling the suspect into a sense of security, while taking due precautions. The insurances were effected for the purpose of re-arranging some old debts, which his marriage with a well-dowered wife allowed him to place on a more satisfactory footing with a view to gradual repayment with the aid of her income. The insurance was effected upon her life with her full knowledge and consent, because Merwood had some chronic ailment that prevented his risk being accepted by the company.

The point as to motive will never be quite cleared, but there is little doubt that Ames, who, it transpired, had pressed unwelcome attentions upon Mrs. Merwood to the verge of insult, desired to remove the husband in the hope of succeeding him. By the Merwoods' wish, the real facts that led up to the Collector's mysterious suicide, were confined to the four who knew them, and as two of these—Mark Poignand and Kala Persad—shortly left for England, there is little fear that the true story will ever filter into the *gup* of the Cantonments.

(For the continuation of this series, see page 28.)



THE CAPTAIN'S WIFE.

By W. L. ALDEN.

"SPEAKING of women," said the mate, "no man respects women more than I do. My mother was a woman, sir! and I make no doubt yours was a woman, too"

I admitted that the mate's surmise was correct.

"Well, sir! having said what I have, you won't misunderstand me when I say that the one thing I can't stand is a woman aboard ship. I've been to sea with corpses, two or three dozen of 'em at a time—Chinamen, you understand, that were being sent home from 'Frisco to be buried. And I've made a long voyage with a ship-full of parsons, that insisted on holding prayer-meetings on the quarter-deck every fine day, and found fault with me every time I sang out to the man at the wheel, or gave any sort of an order. 'A gentleman, Mr. Smith,' says one of them to me one day, after I had called the watch aft to brace up the yards, while he was preaching, 'would wait till the sermon was over.' And I've sailed with drunken captains, and crazy captains, and all sorts of crews; but what I say is, 'Give me corpses, and parsons, and lunatics, every day in the year, sooner than women.' A woman, when she's aboard ship, is either sick, in which case she expects the whole ship's company to do nothing but wait upon her, or she isn't sick, in which case she is interfering with everything, and getting in everybody's way."

"Yet there was a woman," I remarked, "a captain's wife, who took command of the ship when her husband died, and brought her into port."

"I've heard that yarn," the mate replied, "ever since I first went to sea, and I believed it once, when I didn't know any better. If you'll just overhaul your recollection, sir! you'll find that the same yarn is told of about twenty different ships, and you'll find, too, that you never saw a man who had met the woman, or who had ever known any man who had seen as much as the smallest Irish pennant flying from her bonnet. Where was the mate, and where was the second mate when this woman took command of the ship? That's what I'd like to know. And then the yarn goes on to say that the woman received a master's certificate after she reached port, though who gave a certificate to a woman who had never served as mate, and who hadn't a single blessed discharge to show, I never found out. No, sir! I can't hoist that yarn in, whatever you may be able to do.

"But to come back to what I was talking about. Were ever you shipwrecked in company with a woman? Well! you can be thankful you were not. It's bad enough to have to abandon your ship and take to the boats when you're a thousand miles from land and your chance of being picked up is about one in a thousand; but if you have to take a woman in the boat with you it's just—I beg your pardon, sir! and I won't use language again. But it aggravates me to think of the experience I once had with a woman in a boat.

"I was mate of a big clipper ship in the China trade at the time I am telling you of. She was the *Chariot of the Seas*, and most likely you remember her. She was a smart ship, but about as uncomfortable a one as a man ever set foot aboard. The captain's name was M'Conigle, and he was a Scotchman, and he took his wife with him. I wouldn't have shipped if I had known that there was to be a woman in the cabin, but I naturally didn't find it out until we came to sail.

"The captain was about as hard and about as mean as they make 'em, so far as the crew were concerned, but I am free to say that he always treated me well, and was the most sociable man I ever sailed with. He'd walk the quarter-deck with me by the hour, and sometimes in the night, when it was my watch on deck, he'd turn out, it might be in the middle watch, or early in the morning, and yarn away to me till I could hardly keep awake. What was curious, however, was that he had mighty little to say to his wife. Neither of them seemed to care a straw for the other, and at first I couldn't understand why he took her with him when he might have left her ashore.

"She was a handsome woman. There isn't any doubt about that, though I'll ask you to take my word for it, for I'm no hand at describing a woman. She was young, being, as I should judge, about twenty-five, and she carried more sail in the way of high spirits than any sober woman I ever knew. She was always laughing and singing, and making jokes with the captain and me, though she couldn't ever get a smile out of him. On the contrary, when she tried a joke on him he would look so grim that you couldn't have hoisted a smile out of him not even with the steam winch. I mistrusted the woman from the first. There was something reckless about her which you never find in a good woman. And then before we had been a week out of London she began making eyes at me—at least as far as I could judge.

"There isn't any doubt that the captain was jealous of her, though he didn't seem to care anything for her. He gave her very few chances to be alone with me, for which I was very much obliged to him, for you know my opinion of women aboard ship, and I've told you that I mistrusted this particular woman. One day she and I and the captain were standing near the mizzen rigging, and she was leaning over the rail and singing a French song that sounded as if no decent woman ought to sing it though, of course, I didn't know what the words meant, when a man on the main topsail yard hailed the deck for something, and she turned round suddenly and I saw that her face was wet with tears. Now, I call that suspicious. It's something like that old saying "When the rain's before the wind, then your topsail halyards mind." When a woman sings and cries at the same time—that is, provided she isn't singing hymn tunes—look out for bad weather; at least that's been my experience, and I've seen considerable of women in my day.

"As you might suppose, I had very little to do with the woman. Of course, I treated her politely, she being a woman, and being also the captain's wife; but I never let her come to anchor alongside of me if I could help it. I couldn't help finding out, however, that she and her husband led a cat and dog life, and that she was about as miserable as a woman can be, in spite of her jokes and her singing. That made me all the more shy of her, for an unhappy married woman is more dangerous than a cargo of gunpowder. Wearing list slippers, and knocking off smoking won't help you any with her. I came to the conclusion after a while that the captain had brought his wife to sea because he was jealous of her, and couldn't trust her out of his sight—Which, of course, was foolishness.

"If you've been round the Horn, sir!—as I make no doubt you have—you know what a lot of nonsense is talked about that corner. I don't deny that you are liable to get heavy weather off the Horn, but I've never seen any such weather there as I've seen in the Western Ocean. Going to the westward, you are middling sure to meet with head winds off Cape Horn, and you may be a long time getting round the Cape, but coming to the eastward you seldom have any trouble. Of course, when you strike a heavy snowstorm and a gale of wind, and know that the ice is all around you, it's no sort of a place for a yachting trip, but it's all in a day's work anyhow, and I never could see that there was any reason for giving the Horn a specially bad name.

"It so happened that when the captain judged that it was time to put the ship to the westward, and double the Horn, a heavy easterly gale came up, with thick snow, and the glass falling, not quick, you understand, but slow and steady. There was ice in the neighbourhood, too, for we sighted two icebergs to the southward of us about daybreak. Well, we squared away before the gale, and the old man, he put every stitch on her that she would carry, and there we were, she logging a good fifteen knots, and the weather so thick you couldn't see half the length of the ship.

"'There are some men, Mr. Smith,' says the captain to me, 'who would shorten sail and try to keep a look-out for ice. Now, that isn't my style. I don't like ice any better than any other man does, but so long as I can't see it I don't worry over it. There is no good in keeping a look-out for ice when you couldn't see an iceberg till your flying jibboom fouled it, and if she's going to strike an iceberg, she'll do it under her topsails just as soon as she will with her top gallant sails. No, sir, my idea is, in weather like this, to give her everything she'll carry, and what she won't carry let her drag. If there's an iceberg in the road it won't get out of the way for us, and we can't get out of the way for it, so the only thing to do is to just slam the ship right through till we get clear weather again. Seems to me, Mr. Smith, that she'd carry the main royal. Anyhow we'll give it to her, and see what she does with it.'

"I never was afraid to carry sail myself when there was any reason for it, and though I felt a little nervous, knowing that we might pile up on an iceberg any minute, I knew that the old man was right, and that he would have been a fool to have wasted a fair wind. Well, we gave her the main royal, and owing to its being a new piece of canvas, and owing to our having set up our standing rigging the week before we came up with the Horn, she carried it, and went storming and wallowing on her course, with two men at the wheel, and nobody on the look-out; for the forecastle was a regular shower bath, and all a look-out could have done would have been to hold on to something and try to wipe the brine out of his eyes.

"She was one of those ships where all hands are on deck in the afternoon, which is something I don't hold with, believing that you can get more work out of a crew if you give 'em watch and watch. Excepting the steward and the captain's wife, and the cook, and the men at the wheel, all hands were under the lee of the long boat, and the second mate was smoking in the door of the caboose. All at once the old man says, 'I'll go below now, Mr. Smith, and you'll call me if there is any change in the weather.' With that he started to go below, but on second thoughts turned and went forrard. He had reached the caboose, and stood talking with the second mate, whose name was Ramsey, a good fellow and a good seaman, who had been shipmate once before with me, though I don't just now remember where, when there came a splintering crash as the flying jibboom struck an iceberg fair and square, and in another second the ship struck with a force that threw me flat on the deck. Before I could pick myself up all three masts went, the foremast and mainmast going just below the futtuck shrouds, and carrying the mizen topmast to keep them company. There was a yell from the men when she struck, and then there wasn't a sound but the breaking of the sea on the iceberg, and the singing of the wind in the mizen rigging.

"I ran forrard to see what damage had been done to the ship, but I didn't need to look twice to see that her bows were stove in below the water line, and that she hadn't many minutes to float. Then I looked for the captain, and found him and more than half of the crew lying dead under the mainmast that had crushed them and the second mate as well. I told the men to clear away one of the quarter boats, and put a breaker of water in her, and then I jumped below, and got a bag of biscuits and told the steward to bring anything to eat he could lay his hand on. I stopped in my room with an idea of getting my sextant, but I knew that was foolishness, and so I caught up a bottle of

She turned round suddenly, and I saw that her face was wet with tears.

wine that happened to be in the room, and sang out for the captain's wife. I couldn't see anything of her, and thinking that she must be on deck by this time, I rushed up the companion way, and found her in the boat holding on to one of the falls, and ordering the men to wait for me with a pistol in her right hand. About half the men were casting loose the other boat, and in less time than I am taking to tell you about it both boats had been lowered, and were lying on their oars a little astern of the ship, which had drifted clear of the berg, but was sinking fast. There were six men, besides myself and the captain's wife, in our boat, and seven men in the other boat. Each boat had a breaker of water, but all the provisions were aboard my boat, so I gave the others one of our two bags of biscuits, and telling them to keep within hail of us, we pulled away from the wreck so as to be clear of her when she went into her flurry. We lost sight of the other boat before we had been rowing ten minutes, and nothing was ever heard or seen of her afterwards.

"There was no use in trying to land on Terra del Fuego, even supposing we knew what course to steer for it without a compass, and in a blinding snowstorm; for we were better off in the boat than we would have been on a deserted island with nothing to eat except ourselves, and a lot of savages standing by to eat us. So I told the men we would keep on to the westward, and that as soon as we got into the Pacific we should have fine weather, and be sure to be picked up by somebody. There was rather more sea on than I liked, considering that we were in an open boat and running before it, but I was afraid to hoist the sail because I didn't want to run into another iceberg. However, we had to keep steerage way on the boat, and to keep her out of the way of the following seas, so I put four men at the oars and told them to pull an easy stroke, just enough to keep the boat ahead of the seas, without trying to break the record by making a quick passage round the Horn.

"I don't think the captain's wife and I had spoken since the boat cast off. She naturally sat in the stern sheets with me, and she knew that her husband had been killed without my telling her about it. When we had shook ourselves down in the boat, and were beginning to be comfortable, I says to her: 'This ain't the sort of yachting trip that is suited to you, ma'am; but it won't last long, and we must just make the best of it.'

"'It's heaven compared with that ship' said she. 'This is the first happy moment I've known since we sailed from London.'

She did her level best to make me mad in love with her.

"I didn't like her way of talking, considering that she had just lost her husband; so I only said, 'I'm glad, ma'am, that you are not afraid.' We didn't say any more for the next hour, and then she told me that she was used to steering a boat, and that when I wanted to sleep she would take the tiller. I tried her, so as to see if she told the truth, and found that she did; so I says, 'If you please, ma'am, you and I'll keep watch and watch, for I don't care to trust the boat with any one of those chaps forrard.' I don't know how she learned to steer, for I never asked her, but steer she could, about as well as you or me, sir!

"Towards night the snow stopped falling, and the weather cleared off beautiful. The wind went down, too, and I told the men that they might knock off rowing and turn in, and that the lady and I would look after the boat. You see I knew that the stock of provisions was mighty small, and that the more the men slept the less they would eat. Besides, there was no use in keeping at the oars when the boat would do well enough without them. We wer'n't trying to make any port, and our chances of being picked up were just as good lying where we were, as they would have been five hundred miles to the westward or nor'rard.

"It wasn't long before the men were asleep, and I was finding it pretty hard to keep my own eyes open. All at once the woman says, 'Your name is Tom, isn't it?'

"'That's what I was christened, and that's the name in my discharges,' says I.

"'My name is Mary,' she continued. 'I want you to call me Mary and I'll call you Tom. It's too ridiculous for shipwrecked people to go on calling one another Mr. This and Mrs. That.'

"'Very good, ma'am,' says I.

"'And now, Tom,' said she, 'I want you to go to sleep. I'm not sleepy and you are. Give me the helm and I'll call you if anything happens.'

"I couldn't see why I shouldn't do as she said, so I just clasped my arms and shut my eyes and was off in a minute. I slept for hours, and when I woke I was lying with my head in the woman's lap, though how it got there is more than I know.

"I started up and began to apologise, but she stopped me, and said, 'It was I that did it. Why shouldn't I try to make you comfortable? That's what women are for.' So I thanked her, and as the men were pretty well awake by this time, I served out biscuit and water, and after breakfast we stepped the mast and made sail on the boat, which left all hands at liberty except me.

We pulled away from the wreck.

"I'm not going to give you a regular log of every hour aboard that boat. We had pleasant weather for three or four days, by which time, I judge, we were fairly round the Horn, and so I put her head to the nor'rard. All that time we never saw a sail, and at the end of three days the biscuit was nearly all gone, so that we had come down to an allowance of about an inch square a day for each man. The men were grumbling, as sailors always will in such circumstances; they have no more sense than so many children, but so long as they contented themselves with grumbling I didn't much mind, especially as I knew the woman had her pistol, while none of the men had anything but their sheath knives.

"Mary and I had got pretty well acquainted during the three days. You can't sit next to a good-looking woman all day in an open boat, and sleep with your head in her lap, and have her sleeping with her head on your shoulder, without getting to know her middling well. As for her, she didn't make the least pretence of shyness. She began by telling me how she would trust me with anything, and how happy she was to be with me instead of being with her husband aboard the *Chariot of the Seas*. I don't suppose there is any harm in my telling you that she regularly made love to me, and, what is the most curious part of the whole thing, she really meant it. Why, she proposed to me that after we were picked up and reached port we should be married.

"'Thank you, ma'am,' says I, 'for your good opinion; but the fact is, I'm married already.'

"'But not to a woman that you have been cast away with in an open boat! That's as good as any marriage. Besides, I know you don't care for your wife, and if you don't care for me now you will in time. I never yet saw the man I couldn't make love me.'

"'Excuse me, ma'am,' said I, 'but my wife's a good woman.'

"'And I'm not a good woman!' she cried. 'Of course I'm not, but I love you, Tom, and your wife doesn't love you.'

"Now, this is where the woman wasn't far wrong. My wife was a little too fond of taking the weather side of the quarter-deck, and she didn't make my home so comfortable that I hankered after it when I was at sea. She has been dead this many a year, poor woman, and I'm not doing her any harm in saying what I do. She was too good for me. I suppose that was what was the matter.

"After this little conversation that I've repeated the captain's wife didn't say anything more about marrying me, but she was that gentle and affectionate to me that the devil himself couldn't have helped but like it. She would nestle up against me when she wanted to sleep, without caring a straw what the men might think, and once she told me to kiss her for good-night, and I did it.

"The fourth day the men turned out stiff and hungry and savage, and after talking a little while among themselves one of them spoke up and said that they had resolved that I should serve out the bottle of rum that I had kept hid in the stern sheets, and that after that they would let me know what they intended to do. The bottle of port wine, or rum as they supposed it was, I had been keeping to give to the woman in case she, being weaker than the rest of us, should show signs of giving out, and I didn't know the men had seen it. I told them it was not rum, but they said they'd judge of that themselves, and that the sooner I handed it over the better it would be for me and the woman.

"'You shall have it,' said Mary. 'Wait a bit and I'll get the cork out!' So saying she turned her back to them, and was busy with the bottle for a minute before she handed it over to the men. 'I'm afraid,' she said, 'that it may not agree with you, considering how little you've eaten, but if you insist on it I suppose you must have it.'

"I asked her if she didn't want any of the wine herself, and if she had said 'yes,' she should have had it or there would have been a fight. But she said she wouldn't touch it, and that she asked it as a particular favour that I wouldn't touch it either. I told her that there was a mighty little chance that the men would offer me any. Starving sailors don't go in very much for politeness. I told her, however, that I should like to have her pass me her pistol, for I might need it in the course of the day; but I was disappointed to find that she had accidentally dropped it overboard just as we left the wreck. However, the men supposed she had it still, which might prove of some use.

"But the pistol was never needed. Within half-an-hour after the men had emptied the bottle they began to complain of terrible pains, and pretty soon they were all rolling in the bottom of the boat in agony. Before night every blessed one of them was dead, and Mary and I had hove them overboard. I smelt the bottle, and I smelt strychnine. How it got into the bottle I didn't know, and I didn't try to know. Mary didn't have much to say about it, all she did say was, 'Those men would have murdered us before to-morrow night if this hadn't happened. They have only themselves to blame.'

"After that we were alone, in the boat, and, considering there were only two of us, I was able to serve out enough biscuit every day to keep us from actual suffering, though, of course, we were always pretty hungry. Mary seemed as happy as a bird. She sang to me, and cooed around me, and did her level best to make me mad in love with her. Of course I liked it. Where is there a man who wouldn't have liked it? But, all the same, I didn't love her. There never was a time when I wasn't afraid of her. I don't mean afraid, as you or I might be of a junk full of Chinese pirates, but afraid as a man sometimes is in the dark. I was afraid of the dark that was in the woman's soul, though I knew she loved me.

"Two days after we were left alone I went to the breaker to draw some water, and I found that it had nearly all leaked out. I couldn't help making an exclamation, and Mary wanting to know what was the matter, I had to tell her. I found the leak and stopped it, but there wasn't more than a gill of water left in the boat. For the first time since we left the wreck the woman seemed to grow serious, and she asked me several times how long a man could live without water, and how long we could make the gill of water last. I put the best face on it I could, but we were in a bad place and there was no use in trying to conceal it.

"The night after she had nestled on my shoulder to go to sleep she put her arms round my neck and said, 'I'm not a good woman, Tom. You will always know that; but I want you to promise me never to forget that I love you as no other woman ever will, and that I would have been good for your sake.' I told her she was the best shipmate a man could possibly be wrecked with, and that I made no doubt that after we got ashore she would be as good a woman as ever stepped. She didn't answer, but after lying on my shoulder for an hour, she roused up and said that she couldn't sleep, and that she would rather take the tiller and let me sleep. So I kissed her, and turned in, and what struck me as queer at the time was that she turned away her lips, and told me to kiss her on the forehead. She never said another word, and being more tired than usual, I slept sound till daybreak.

"When I woke up I was lying, not with my head in Mary's lap, but on a pillow made of her petticoats, and the shawl she used to wear round her shoulders. But Mary was gone, and that's the last I ever heard of her.

"I understood in a minute what she had done. I had told her that one man might perhaps live on a gill of water for three or four days, and she had gone overboard, so as there shouldn't be but one mouth to be wet with that water.

"Yes! As I was saying, women are a nuisance at sea, but when I saw that poor woman's shawl and petticoats folded so careful under my head, and saw that she was gone, I wished that it had been me instead of her. I thought I was a middling decent man, and I knew she wasn't a good woman, but I never met another woman, good or bad, who would have done for me what the captain's wife did."

THE BELLE of the FOUR CORNERS

By G. B. BURGIN.
(Author of "His Lordship," &c.)

Chapter I.

In those primitive days folk were not wont to let concealment "like a worm i' the bud" prey on their cheeks, which were certainly the reverse of damask, for the swamp just beyond the village had a knack of robbing people's complexions of all colour save an unhealthy, sallow yellow. Old Man Evans, when remonstrated with in his sober moments for erecting his dwelling on the very verge of the swamp, was guilty of startling profanity. "Some of you Four Corner jays," he declared—"Some of you Four Corner jays gits to puttin' on sich frills thar ain't no holdin' of you down. No, sir. We don't go in for no bloomin' peonies in this yer lo-cality. The swamp's handy for timber, an' I ain't agoin' to move. Lucilla's as pretty as a pictur, an' kin lift a load of flour with anybody. Git out with your durned foolishness." And people got out accordingly.

Lucilla was "as pretty as a pictur." The man bold enough to say otherwise would have speedily found himself removed to another sphere of usefulness, for one of Old Man Evans' rooted beliefs, drunk or sober, was that since the beginning of time there never had been such a girl, and it was exceedingly improbable Nature would ever produce a second miracle of the same sort.

Indeed, when popular opinion came to dissect Old Man's opinion of Lucilla, it was unanimously decided that he had full justification for his parental pride. Lucilla was wondrously beautiful, and she never "went back" on Old Man. "Not but what," declared old Ikey Marston to a select circle of friends assembled in solemn conclave at Miller's store—"Not but what we are yuanimously—I sez yuanimously, boys—of opinion it's a surprisin' sorter thing Old Man should ever have been the pyrogenitor——"

"The what?" demanded Miller, the one man in the store who dared to dispute with so learned an etymologist as Ikey. "The who?"

"The pyrogenitor," said Ikey, stonily unmindful of all ribald interruption—"the pyrogenitor of such a gal as Lucilla; it's what they calls in Latin—Does any of you boys know Latin?"

"No," said the crowd with one voice. "Tain't likely we'd be puttin' on style like that."

"In course it ain't," admitted Ikey in tones of frank superiority. "Wal then, it's what they calls in Latin a '*lusus daturum*,' and if anyone don't know what that means I ain't agoin' to—You, Miller, take yer sniggerin' head outen that 'ere flour bar'l and go one better if you kin."

But Miller prudently declined the challenge, and Ikey Marston strode forth somewhat unsteadily into the sweet spring sunshine, and made his way past the village towards the lonely swamp in order to ingratiate himself with Old Man Evans. Despite the bewildering influence of the afternoon air, Ikey retained sufficient worldly wisdom to be aware that this proceeding was rash. Old Man was quite capable of getting down his shot-gun from the rack in order to pepper any disbeliever in his daughter's charms.

Half an hour later, when Ikey reached the swamp, he found Old Man sitting before the door of his wooden shanty upon an inverted box sleigh. His back was comfortably disposed against the wall; a corn-cob pipe hung meditatively from the left hand corner of his mouth; and a whiskey jug at his elbow betokened that the father of Lucilla had taken the precaution of guarding himself from the combined effects of chills and a certain phenomenal yet constitutional aridity.

"Times ain't what they was," he said in jerks. "It's enough to make a man feel disponsive-like when thar ain't no fun nowadays. Nobody's shot; the mail ain't been held up for three months since Jules Ramonville was jailed, and everybody knows if his brother got his deserts he'd be in the sheriff's hands 'stead of Jules. Thar ain't been a sociable tar an' featherin' or any other little pleasantness for weeks. It's enuff to make a man disponsive-like when thar ain't no fun stirrin' at all."

Ikey nodded a cordial acquiescence to Old Man's lamentations over the decay of the picturesque. Suddenly he heard a low whinny from the neighbouring shed which served as a stable. The head of a beautiful bay filly peeped over the cross-bar. "Whar did you git her?" he asked curiously. "It's a Don Pedro filly ain't it? They've all got the white blaze down the face. I fancy I've seen her before."

Old Man looked momentarily startled and sobered. "Oh, it's Lucilla's," he said in tones of ill-disguised pride. "Never been harnessed in her life."

"You ain't agoin' to keep her for the saddle?" demanded Ikey. "That mare'd just play with a buggy, an' never feel it."

Old Man considered. "She's a present to Lucilla, for to do what she likes with. I reckon if we got her into harness she'd trot her 2-40 on a plank road easy. Lucilla says she's young an' she won't have her spoiled for ridin' yet awhile."

"In course," said Ikey. "Lucilla 'll look well on her."

"You bet," said Old Man laconically. "The mare's got that fond of Lucilla she's allers a whinnyin' for her. I did orter have kept the door shut but I forgot it."

"But she can't hear Lucilla's about, surelie?" asked Ikey.

"You bet she kin," said Old Man. "Lucilla's bound to be in the bush at the back thar, and the mare knows it. I'll jest let down the bar," he added with drunken gravity, "and you'll see some fun."

He threw down the bar and the beautiful bright bay stepped daintily out, her nostrils opened wide. Suddenly she whirled round as a whistle came from the bush and was out of sight before Ikey had recovered from his surprise.

"Wal," he ejaculated, "you'll never see that mare again; it's the prettiest piece of horseflesh I ever set eyes on. I seem to know her though."

"Wait," said Old Man laconically. "Wait an' you'll see something purtier if Lucilla don't know you're round."

Presently the mare returned with Lucilla on her back. The girl rode without saddle or bridle, simply grasping a lock of the mare's mane to steady herself, but the spirited animal, though moving swiftly, did not indulge in any antics which would have unseated her mistress. Lucilla's dark eyes glowed with delight, her hair waved wildly in the breeze, and her magnificent proportions showed to splendid advantage as she sat the mare with statuesque grace. She seemed disconcerted on seeing Ikey Marston, and darted a reproachful glance at Old Man as he led the mare back to the stable.

"Maybe," she said significantly to Ikey, "maybe you 'lowed to see me riding up just now?"

Ikey was puzzled. "I sorter seemed to see it," he admitted dubiously, as if mistrusting his own senses. "Kinder seemed to me as Old Man's jest took the mare back to the stable."

"Better make sure," said the girl with a glance of quiet significance at the whiskey jug. "P'raps if you was to come into the stable you'd find out you'd been seein' double."

She led the way over to the stable. Old Man seemed to realise that he had made a mistake, and gazed at them from the doorway with an air of stolid indifference.

Lucilla led the way into the stable. It was empty. "You understand?" she asked.

Ikey did not, but cordially perjured himself. Lucilla laid her hand caressingly on his shoulder and drew him still further into the recesses of the stable.

"Don't see nothin', don't know nothin'," she said expressively; "and keep your mouth shut. Dad does, when it ain't full of whiskey, which is seldom. Lucky 'twas only you."

Ikey had such implicit faith in Lucilla that he did not ask any questions. There was evidently a mystery somewhere.

"What time does the coach come down from the Springs to-night?" inquired Lucilla anxiously.

"'Bout ten," said Ikey; "but there's a new driver this season and he may be a little later. It's a nasty bit at the L'Ange Guardienne, jest afore the road dips into the bush. Why, if there was any road-agents about"—and he chuckled—"two men could hold up the hull load."

The girl listened eagerly. Then she laughed. "Oh, since Ramonville was jailed, the road-agents have all cleared out."

"Maybe," said Ikey, "but the passengers are loaded up with weppings all the same. I heard Ramonville's brother comes down from the Springs to-night with all his title deeds to the Ramonville grant. I never did rightly understand that business, the way he cheated Jules"—something seemed to strike him suddenly—"Why, it was that very night Jules Ramonville held up the coach when his brother was inside."

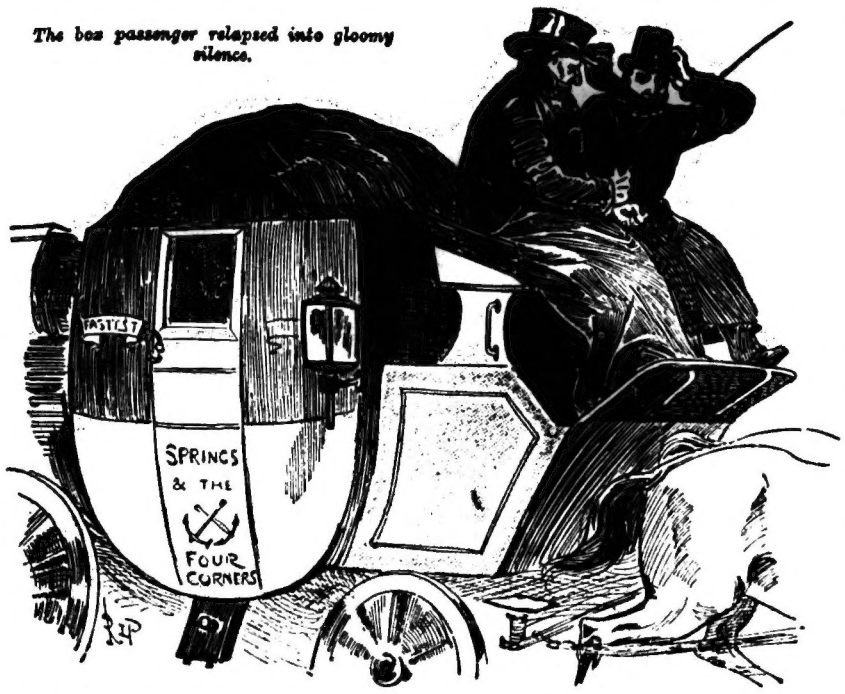
"Don't you see," said the girl passionately. "He only wanted to get back the deeds that skunk of a brother had stolen from him. Pierre put a bullet into Jules and got him convicted just to have him out of the way. Jules had warned him he would make him restore the deeds, and so he was on the look out all the time."

Ikey began to understand why Jules had taken to the road. "And you got the mare?" he asked.

"Yes; I found her straying in the bush. Pierre looked for her, but she was too cute." Lucilla blushed slightly but

Beauty kept the bar.

did not stop to explain how it was that the mare knew her so well. "I made dad build a little shanty into the bush at the back where the trees come right over the stable, and fitted a door to it. It's just big enough to hold her; she's as



The box passenger relapsed into gloomy silence.

quiet as a chipmunk when strangers are round. Dad's been drinking pretty heavily or he wouldn't have let her into the outer stable at all."

Ikey nodded again. "I'll keep an eye on the old man," he said, "till after the coach comes down."

"Yes," said the girl, with a significant look. "Till after the coach comes down!"

Ikey stood looking after the girl's retreating form. "Guess I know what she's up to," he said. He walked out of the stable. "It might facilitate matters if me an' Old Man was to spread a few trees across the road thar just by the L'Ange Guardienne dip. She's got grit, that girl. Now for Old Man."

He strode back to that worthy, hid his gun under the bed, emptied the whiskey jug on the ground, and brought out a pail of water. "You may reckon, Old Man, it's sorter unfriendly to discount your spree in this yer permiscuous fashion, but your head's got to go inter that bucket of water to draw out the whiskey. You hear me, Old Man! For Lucilla's sake."

Old Man looked round for his gun, but, not finding it, made the supreme sacrifice of coming in personal contact with cold water. Then they brought out a couple of axes from the house, and, after cautiously looking all round, plunged into the bush in the direction of the L'Ange Guardienne trail.

CHAPTER II.

AT eight o'clock that evening the dark bulk of the "Springs" coach loomed up against the white background of the hotel buildings. The leaders were fretful and eager, pawed the ground as if anxious to be off, and threw up their heads impatiently at the caressing touch of Lajeunesse's hand. As that worthy climbed slowly to the box with impressive dignity, he cast a searching glance round. "I disremember seein' such a night," he said to the box-passenger, who had been admitted to the proud privilege of paying for his (Lajeunesse's) drinks all the way down. "I disremember such a night since that old feller inside was with us an' shot his brother in the shoulder. Ramonville his name is. Lives way off on the flats. A lawyer! No wonder we've only one passenger left when there's a lawyer about."

The box-passenger drew up the collar of his cloak. "'Tain't a nice night," he said anxiously. "Hadn't we better stop over?" He cast a longing glance in the direction of the hotel saloon whence issued sounds of revelry. It was warm in there, the *cuisine* was good, and beauty kept the bar. Why renounce this unexpected accumulation of good things for the cold seat on the coach, a privilege not inexpensive, and a chance of being upset in the darkness. The passenger was young, and yearned after the flesh pots.

"Young man," said Lajeunesse, impressively gathering up the reins, "air you runnin' this concern or me?"

"Why you are," admitted the passenger in conciliatory tones.

"Prezakerly," said Lajeunesse. "That bein' the case perhaps you'll stop your durn foolishness an' sit tight. I ain't goin' to be publicly disgraced by drivin' this yer coach into the Four Corners with only a lawyer in it. No, sir."

The leaders plunged forward as he spoke and the next moment the ungainly vehicle went swaying and creaking foward into the darkness, whilst loud imprecations were heard from Ramonville as his head plunged against the interior of the coach at every jolt.

"Serve him right," said Lajeunesse, flicking his impatient leaders. "It'll knock the stuffin' outen him."

The box passenger apprehensively sat tight as the coach raced down an incline and the leaders galloped up the opposite slope. "Sure you know the way?" he asked apprehensively. "Seems to me we just shaved a tree."

"My son," said Lajeunesse, "if you're afeard sittin' up here you'd better git inside an' pull down the blinds. If the coach was to go over—if it was, I say, an' sech things have been known—then you'd make sure of breaking every bone in your body whiles here—" He paused appreciatingly, and flicked his whip over the ears of the off leader.

"Whiles here?" queried the box-passenger.

"You'd break your neck right off, an' git it over," said Lajeunesse cheerfully. "No patchin' you up an' fittin' you with ornamental cork legs or any of that foolishness. You'd jest pitch on your head and dislerkate your neck in a second. Ob thar's style in fallin' off the box. Real style! Whoa, my lads. Whoa!"

The box-passenger relapsed into gloomy silence. He would much rather have been inside with even Ramonville for a companion, but feared to encounter Lajeunesse's ill-concealed derision at his cowardice. All the coach accidents he had ever heard of floated through his brain as they hurried on, the rattle of the harness making a cheerful accompaniment to cheerless thoughts. "Is there—Is there any need for all this hurry?" he asked Lajeunesse, somewhat apprehensive of another rebuff.

"You bet there is, my son," said Lajeunesse cheerfully. "You're booked in the waybill to be landed in good order and condition at Four Corners in time for the night-boat, an' I'm goin' to hustle you through."

The box-passenger did not feel at all grateful for this delicate attention on Lajeunesse's part. He was a timid young city man, unused to primitive methods, and felt that there was every probability of their proving too much for him.

They were now going at breakneck speed through a patch of bush leading to the L'Ange Guardienne dip. There was barely room for the coach on the narrow, rutty way, but Lajeunesse did not for an instant relax his reckless haste. His companion's remark had put him on his mettle; he was resolved to show him what could be done by a skilful charioteer. The coach swept on beneath the brushing branches of the overhanging pines, a faint glow-worm light from the lamps making two reddish spots on the ground. All else was darkness and silence save for the occasional cry of some unclean night-bird. The box-passenger at last realised it mattered little whether he dashed his brains out against an overhanging tree branch, broke his neck in falling, or smashed every limb when the coach upset. Something unpleasant seemed inevitable, and he braced himself to meet it.

"Are you armed?" asked Lajeunesse suddenly, as they emerged from the bush and the leaders slowed down a little on the level bit of road preceding the dip.

"N-no. Why?"

"Oh, nothin'," said Lajeunesse, "only a little ahead's the place where Laforce got into trouble when Jules was settled. You bet the old man inside's loaded up to the teeth. I don't want to loose the pull of gallopin' up the dip, but—Well, here goes."

The box-passenger clinched his teeth and sat tight as the quivering and groaning coach rattled down the dip. Suddenly Lajeunesse's practised eye detected a dark obstacle ahead of him in the gloom. Before he could pull up, the coach was into it. The next moment there was a crash. Lajeunesse, still holding the reins, went one way, the apprehensive passenger another. When the latter recovered consciousness, the leaders had kicked themselves free, and the coach lay on one side in the darkness. He made a motion to get up, but felt too feeble to do anything except vaguely wonder what would happen next. In the midst of his confusion he was not wholly griefstricken that the horn of Lajeunesse had been lowered into the dust.

"If I was you, stranger," said a persuasive voice in his ear, "I'd stop here;" and the icy barrel of a pistol touched the passenger's neck and sent a cold thrill down his spinal chord.

He collapsed with a groan.

"You not bein' hurt, for I've felt all over you," said the persuasive voice in gentlest tones—"You not bein' hurt, might jest as well keep outen this little business."

"Then it wasn't an accident?" queried the young man.

A gentle chuckle came through the darkness. "It mout ha' been an' it mout not, stranger, but I want to know if you'll keep quiet."

"I—I give you my word," gasped the young man.

"In that case you kin sit up," said the voice.

The young man sat up and ruefully rubbed himself as someone proceeded to skilfully tie him to a tree. "Now," said the same gentle voice, "you'll be all right and cumerfable till the morning. If you'd like a chaw of baccy, stranger, say so, and you shall have it."

"I don't chaw," said the young man disgustedly. "You needn't have fixed me up quite so tight, you old ruffian."

"Wal, wal, now," said the same gently persuasive voice, "thar's worse things than a chaw to keep out the cold of a night like this. But, if your principles is agin it, I don't want to purswade anyone agin his principles. You jest keep quiet, my young friend, till our little bit of business is over, an' you'll be all right. If you

"If I was you, stranger, I'd stop here;" and the icy barrel of a pistol touched the passenger's neck.

don't," continued the man in the same pensive, melancholy way, "I'm really afeerd this old kicker 'll go off by herself an' you mout git hurt."

Again the cold muzzle of the pistol touched the young man with convincing force.

"You might swear," continued the voice," as you won't identerfy any of us in futoor should we come across one another's tracks. This ain't the nicest sort of an interduction, an' we might find it pleasanter to begin fresh, so as to start fair."

"I swear," said the young man solemnly. "Nothing would ever induce me to tell."

A horny hand shook his with friendly force. "Now I must go over an' see how Lajeunesse is gittin' on," said the strange voice. "He rather came down kerflop an' saved us a good deal of trouble, but his language when he finds the coach has been held up won't please the Four Corners Bible Society."

At that moment Lajeunesse's voice, raised in violent objurgation, broke upon the air and relieved the young man of all anxiety on that score.

"Ain't it pleasant to listen to 'im," said the stranger. "Ain't it real nice to hear him cover the ground in that high-toned way, hittin' the mark plum centre every time, so to speak. Young man, Lajeunesse don't often let hisself loose but when he does it's an opportunity an' a privilege to listen to him. That's what it is. An' opportunity, an' a privilege."

The box-passenger heard him cross clumsily over the road and speak to Lajeunesse. That worthy's flow of language suddenly ceased and all was still.

As the moon began to rise through the pitchy darkness of the night, the passenger could dimly discern the figures of three men and a horse standing by the side of the coach. One of the coach lanterns which had escaped injury flared on the top of the coach as two of the men broke away one of the windows and hauled Ramonville through. Then the youngest man dived into the coach and came out with a black box. Ramonville was hoisted on to the horse, and the trio disappeared.

The bay mare, with the white blaze on her face.

The box-passenger at length fell asleep. When he awoke he found Lajeunesse sitting on a log and gloomily regarding the fallen coach which still blocked the road. He shouted to Lajeunesse, who got up and slowly untied him. "Young man," he said with impressive dignity, "if it hadn't been for your fool questions I'd ha' seen what was goin' on. I reckon I made a statement to you last night?"

"Yes," said the young man wonderingly; "you did."

"I said as I'd land you in time for the night-boat."

"I know you did," said the box-passenger bitterly.

"Wal, young man, you kin discount the statement by jest one hundred per cent. It was a lie." And Lajeunesse gloomily walked out of the bush followed by the young man, who was very cold and hungry and not at all inclined to argue the point.

CHAPTER III.

THE Four Corners had not been provided with such an exciting episode as the holding up of the "Springs" coach for nearly two months. The strangest part of the whole business, however, was the inexplicable disappearance of Pierre Ramonville, deeds and all. As Pierre Ramonville was the principal witness against his brother at the forthcoming trial there seemed to be every probability of an acquittal. Jules had been found in the bush bleeding from a bullet wound in the shoulder. The only evidence against him was that of Pierre, who swore that his brother had tried to rob the coach and that he (Pierre) had fired upon him in self-defence. Laforce, the former driver, professed entire ignorance of the whole affair. It was a dark night when the attack was made. There were trees across the road, and he was so occupied in looking after his horses that he did not see any one. In fact, his manner rather implied that it was all very well to talk about holding up the coach but that if anything of the sort had been attempted he would have known the details. No one had been robbed, no one injured, unless Ramonville was to be believed, and for his part he would not believe him on oath. So that when the jury came to try the case, the Crown Attorney threw up his brief in despair, and the Judge directed a plea of not guilty to be entered on the Court Records. Then Jules, handsome, olive-skinned, and picturesque, received an ovation from everyone except the sheriff who eyed him significantly and determined to keep a watch on the young fellow's movements.

"It's been regular play-acting."

When Jules received the news of his acquittal, he looked round the Court House in a vain search for Lucilla. As he passed out of the Court House door, Lajeunesse stood smoking a big cigar under the tall elms, and the lad hurriedly approached him. "Tell me," he inquired of him in breathless tones, "what has become of Lucilla?"

Lajeunesse beckoned him to come deeper into the shadow of the trees.

"Look here, young man," he growled. "mind what you say or we'll have that lop-eared thief of a sheriff round listenin'. Now, own up. What did you rob the coach for?"

Jules smiled. "I thought Laforce did not see me, Lajeunesse; the night was so dark, and he was so very busy with his horses."

"Maybe he didn't want to see you," said Lajeunesse significantly. "I've got Indian blood in me, and can *feel* who he is when a man's been shot. What I want to know is why you were fool enough to give your brother such a chance to get rid of you?"

"He had my deeds," said the young man excitedly. "He stole them from me, the villain; and was taking them up to one of the big cities so that I shouldn't be able to trace them again. Directly I put my head in at the window of the coach, he fired at me before I could say a word. I did mean to take them away and he guessed it."

Lajeunesse whistled. "Nice sort of elder-brother-parent he is. What have you done with him?"

"I? *Ma foi*, you are mad. I have been shut up in gaol all this time with the good head-gaoler. They only got the bullet out a month ago. I'm as weak as a rat."

Lajeunesse winked. "Don't try any of your hifalutin' style on your friends, young man. What I want to know is how you could be in gaol when I run into them logs, and yet I *saw* you on your bay mare, with the white blaze on her face, waitin' by the upturned coach."

"You saw me?" queried the young man.

"Yes," said Lajeunesse quietly; "I saw you. I'd know that mare in a hundred."

"I shall never see her again," said the young man sorrowfully. "Never again. She was swift as a swallow, strong as a bear, gentle as a dove. She got away that night when I was picked up senseless. I heard the people coming, and sent her off."

"Where'd you tell her to go?" asked Lajeunesse sceptically.

The young man coloured. "You will not betray me?" he asked.

"I could have put the rope round your neck a little while ago if I'd wanted to," said Lajeunesse, "only nobody thought of askin' me if I'd seen you."

The young man was in despair. "I tell you on my honour, no," he said vehemently. "I was in gaol. The gaoler, the doctor, anyone can prove it."

"Come with me," Lajeunesse said. "Guess I'm on the track of this yer business."

He half led, half dragged the young man in the direction of the swamp, and resisted all his companion's entreaties for an explanation. "You leave it to me," he said, as they neared Old Man Evans's somewhat dilapidated residence. "Guess I'll git it cleared up if Old Man's sober."

"S'pose I give you away?"

Old Man was sober and received them with winning sweetness. Jules hurried away from his congratulatory remarks, and looked about for Lucilla, who entered suddenly and turned pale at the sight of her lover. Ikey Marston had followed Lajeunesse. He shut the door, and brought out a whiskey jug from its customary corner.

Lajeunesse sternly waved him away. "I don't drink in this yer place," he said, "till you folks explain why you cut my head open, busted that fool on the box-seat, and smashed up the coach generally. If it hadn't been for Lucilla I'd have rounded on the lot of you."

"It's all through me," said Lucilla. "I knew the only way to save Jules was to get the deeds and threaten Pierre to destroy them if he didn't keep out of the way till the trial was over. I got them."

"Do you mean to say," said Lajeunesse, vainly endeavouring to be stern with her—"Do you mean to say, young woman, you had the onparalleled cussedness to upset me an' my coach by puttin' them logs across the road, all by yourself?"

"I started out to do it," Lucilla shamefacedly admitted; "but dad and Ikey came along to see the fun, and helped."

"But who's the young spark you took with yer?" asked Lajeunesse, mechanically reaching out his hand for the jug.

"Me!" said Lucilla. "I got an old suit of Jules and his pistol."

Lajeunesse grinned. "I s'pose," he said looking round, "none of you high-toned bein's as goes round upsettin' yer fellow creatures, so to speak, happens to know where Pierre is now?"

"Him not bein' a sosherble man," Old Man gravely declared—"Him not bein' a sosherble man, gin'ral sosiety ain't been robbed of much. He'll be restored to his sorrowin' friends at ten to-night prezakerley. For fear he mout have been in a hurry I had to tie him to a staple in the stable wall after he got over the shock to his system. It's been regular play-actin'," Old Man continued with a grin of benevolent enjoyment, "me goin' in with a mask on, an' all ready to shoot. He thinks he's tother side of the Nation river, and I ain't agoin' to ondeceive him."

"S'pose I give you away?" Lajeunesse said to Lucilla.

"At the weddin'?" she asked, and kissed him.

Of course that ended the matter. When Pierre turned up again it was too late. No one believed him, and he quitted the Four Corners vowing vengeance against the brother he had robbed, but threatened men live long.

CHRISTMAS COMES BUT ONCE A YEAR.

☞ *BEFORE YOU FORGET IT,*

Don't miss this. Send at once for our

SELLING BY THOUSANDS. CUSTOMERS DELIGHTED.

More than Five Shillingsworth of ARTISTIC and SEASONABLE NOVELTIES.

1/- CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR PRESENTS 1/-

The Best Shillingsworth ever offered. Contains the whole of the following assortment, eclipsing all previous value. Art Gem Cards, published by Messrs. Raphael Tuck and Sons; Jewelled, Frosted, and Mechanical Cards; Gilt Bevelled Edge Autograph Cards, Elegant-shaped and Relief Edge Cards, Fun and Comic Cards, Made-up and Ideal Trifold Cards in dainty prettiness, Novelties in Relief Scraps for the youngsters, Stained Glass Panel for Window Decoration, &c.—"Really a marvel how such value can be offered for the money."—*Vide* Press.

CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR CARDS.

A choice variety of Thirteen Handsome Cards, usually sold at 1d., 2d., 3d., and 6d. each, by clever artists, and are worth more than the price charged for the whole parcel.

PAIR OF CRYSTOGRAPHS. Transparencies for Window, Fan, and Hall Light, Lamp, or Conservatory Decoration.

The NEW PANORAMA RELIEFS.

Quite a novelty. Highly-coloured Embossed Pictures, illustrating pleasing subjects, made to stand extended as a folding screen.

VERY CHOICE BIRTHDAY CARD.

Messrs. Raphael Tuck & Son's PERFECT MODEL CARD.

Quite a novelty. Constructed to pack flat. When opened, forms a pretty and attractive ornament.

And last, but not least, is our annual FREE GIFT, comprising

The "IDEAL" JEWELLED TRIFOLD CARD.

The novelty of the season, Embossed and Relief Edge Jewelled Card, with delicate trailing Floral Spray Autograph. Nothing prettier could be wished for.

Twenty Charming Presents. A fascinating assortment, that, if bought in the ordinary way, would cost at least Five Shillings.

The whole of the above marvellous shillingsworth will be sent post free for **14 Stamps.** *Two differently Assorted,* **26 Stamps,** *or postal order and stamps to the value preferred, which we guarantee to return if not as represented.*

☞ **Shopkeepers should send for Wholesale Catalogue and Samples of Christmas Cards, Novelties, &c., post free 3 stamps. Cheapest House in London.**

JOHN THRIDGOULD & CO.,

18 & 20, SIDNEY STREET, COMMERCIAL ROAD, LONDON, E.

Established 1851.

BAKER & CO.'S NOVELTIES.

MAGIC LANTERNS. JUVENILE LANTERN SETS.

UPRIGHT MAGIC LANTERNS, on nicely polished wood platform, nickel focussing tubes, fitted with best quality lenses, paraffin lamp, and half dozen slides, each slide containing four or five figures. Price 1s., post free 1s. 3d.

No. 2—1s. 6d., free 1s. 10½d. No. 3, with twelve larger sized slides, about 60 pictures, 2s., free 2s. 4½d. No. 4—Very superior finish, with brass foot and brass chimney, 3s., free 3s. 6d. No. 5—4s., post free 4s. 6d. No. 6—5s. 6d., free 6s.

No. 99a MAGIC LANTERN—Black japanned body, focussing tube, superior lenses, mounted on platform complete. Paraffin burner and six slides. 1s. 6d., free 1s. 9d.

LARGE MAGIC LANTERN—Square English shape, japanned burner, two lenses and focussing tubes complete. 1s. 6d., free.

EVERY DESCRIPTION OF SLIDE KEPT IN STOCK.

THE CELEBRATED "BARBICAN" MAGIC LANTERNS AND SLIDES.

These sets carry the palm over all others. Each set is packed in a handsome box. The lanterns and all of the slides are of superior English make. These are specially got up so as to form nice presents, and will give satisfaction everywhere.

No. 1 Set comprises a best English-made Lantern, fitted with two lenses, paraffin lamp, glass chimney, silvered reflector, 60 really comic figures, on 12 long slides, three complete nursery tales, each tale having 12 pictures on four slides, making 36 more pictures; two comic slipping slides, two moving panorama slides, one "Good Night" slide, one "Welcome," one man swallowing rats, two Chinese fireworks slides, one rackwork slide, one Queen, and one curtain slide, making 109 pictures in all, complete with instructions, giving a picture on the sheet of three feet diameter. Price 10s. 6d., free 11s.

No. 2 precisely similar, but having a No. 2 Lantern and No. 2 Slides, forming a larger size thoughout. Gives a picture four feet in diameter. Price 14s. 6d., free 15s. 6d.

No. 3 size, much larger still, very suitable for a special present, gives a five feet diameter picture, 21s., free 22s.

THE "IXION" LOCOMOTIVE STEAM ENGINE—A splendid locomotive engine on four wheels, with funnel, safety valve, dome handrails, starting lever, two powerful cylinders, with furnace complete. The cheapest locomotive out, 5s., free 5s. 6d., or with whistle, 5s. 6d., free 6s. Without name plate 4s. 6d., free 5s.

THE EXPRESS STEAM LOCOMOTIVE—A beautifully japanned locomotive, with all brass fittings, dome, whistle, safety valve, starting lever, six wheels (all flanged), and two powerful cylinders. Only 10s. 6d., free 11s.

THE ECLIPSE ELECTRIC COILS—We are offering the most wonderful value in Electric Coils for the season, as special leading lines. Each one guaranteed to work, and to administer good strong shocks. No. 1 Coil is finished complete, and mounted on stand with handles and connecting wires. Price 1s., post free 1s. 3d. No. 2 Coil is a larger and more powerful ditto, better finished, and furnished with brass terminals, and is a very superior article, 2s. 6d., post free 2s. 9d. No. 3 Coil is equal to many charged 10s. 6d. for. This Coil has a regulating handle for increasing or decreasing the strength as required, and is fit for any Drawing-room, Bazaar, Lecture Hall, &c. Price 5s. 6d., post free 6s. No. 4, very handsome large Coil, with reversing motion, 10s. 6d. We supply a strong Bichromate Battery suitable for working No. 1 and 2 Coils for 1s. 3d., post free; or a larger ditto for 5s. 6d. and 10s. 6d. Coil for 2s., post free 2s. 4½d.

READ THIS! READ THIS!!

In order to introduce our splendid assortment of Novelties to the public, we are offering, as an advertisement, 1,000 of our new **CELEBRATED CHRISTMAS AMUSEMENT PARCELS.**

Each parcel contains the following extraordinary assortment of Games and Amusements for the long winter evenings:—A Powerful Microscopic Lens for viewing insects in water, &c., &c.; a large Card of Useful Tools, consisting of pincers, gimlet, bradawl, chisel, and other tools, all made of steel, and a very useful iron hammer, a splendid carved Ivorine Miniature Opera Glass, containing a splendid view of London, or other subject; the interesting Game of Snap, with cards complete—very amusing; a large book full of Beautiful Coloured Transfer Pictures, entitled the Lord Mayor's Show; the Game of Draughts, with men and draughtboard complete; the lovely-coloured Picture Book, entitled "A visit to the Zoo," or some other subject; 500 beautiful Japanese Fire Stars; a pretty Box of Picture Cubes; a 6d. Conjuring Trick, entitled "The Shower of Sweets Trick"—very clever; a box of Artificial Frost, for frosting cards, pictures, &c.; one of the celebrated Lawyer's Puzzles, which have caused so much excitement during the last few weeks; an artistically-coloured Comic Moving Figure; and last, but not least, a

MAGNIFICENT SCRAP BOOK.

beautifully printed in gold and colours, cloth bound, measures 12in. by 10in., has a large number of pages, and is suitable for any drawing-room table. We guarantee to send, post free, all the above articles for 2s. 6d., but the coupon below must be cut out and sent with the order.

PEARSON'S CHRISTMAS NUMBER COUPON.
Please send me one of your Winter Amusement Parcels, as described above, for which I enclose 2s. 6d. If found satisfactory, shall be pleased to recommend your goods to my friends.
(Signed) .....

Grand Illustrated Novelty Catalogue of Lanterns, Games, Engines, Novelties, &c., 60 pages, 1,000 Illustrations, 1d. stamp.

BAKER & CO., THE NOVELTY WAREHOUSE, 341, BEECH STREET, BARBICAN, LONDON, E.C.

A SIGNAL SUCCESS.

"'Tis not in mortals to command success, but we'll do more, Sompronius, we'll deserve it."

THE

PEARSON POTTERY CO.,

HANLEY,

ARE SELLING FAST THE MOST WONDERFUL PACKAGE OF CROCKERY IN THE WORLD.

100 Pieces for £1 1s. 0d.

A beautiful Dinner Service of 50 pieces is guaranteed **Worth the Guinea alone,** consequently a charming China Tea Service and a useful Collection of Crockery are given **FOR NOTHING.**

Thousands sold all over the World. Everybody not only satisfied but amazed at the quantity and quality given.

The Secret of the Success.—The Pearson Pottery Company are manufacturers, not middlemen like many other advertisers. The Pearson Potteries have nearly 2,000 ft. frontage to the town of Hanley.

Hundreds of these packages are applied for as **Wedding or Birthday Presents.** And what more useful present can be given? Every item is useful.

The Thirty Shilling Bazaar Parcel is selling well. Apply at once.

Send a Post Card for Particulars. You will never regret it. Freedom from breakage guaranteed. All letters to the

PEARSON POTTERY CO.,

HANLEY.

A USEFUL CHRISTMAS PRESENT.

By Post **6d.** each.

PATENT "ELECTRIC"

SCISSOR SHARPENER.

By Post **6d.** each.

This most useful and inexpensive article gives A KEEN EDGE TO SCISSORS, SHEARS, and the like in a few seconds.

Scissors can be kept continually sharp by using this novel device. INVALUABLE in every Household, Work Basket, Work Room, and to all using scissors. A strong, elegant, and lasting article.

ORDER THROUGH ANY TRADESPEOPLE, OR *POST FREE* FROM THE

PATENT SCISSOR SHARPENER CO., 121, HIGH HOLBORN, LONDON, W.C.

B. Depart. Agents wanted.

The FACTORY CLOTHING Co.,

117, ALBION STREET, LEEDS.

CLOTHING EQUAL TO BESPOKE.

Direct from the Factory to the Consumer, at unprecedented prices.

MEN'S D.B. FRIEZE ULSTER, 54in. long, in dark grey, brown, drab, and light grey, from	**23/9**
YOUTHS' do. do. 44in. long, from	**17/3**
MEN'S D.B. CHESTERFIELDS, 45in. long, in friezes and meltons,	**20/3**
YOUTHS' do. do. 36in. long,	**14/9**
BOYS' REEFERS, blue nap and serge, to fit boys from 3 to 10 years old, from	**3/3**
GIRLS' Tailor-made do. do.	**3/9**
BOYS' LONG CAPE CHESTERFIELDS, in tweeds, curls, and serges. Cape 16in. long, coat 32in. long, to fit boys from 3 to 10,	**8/6**
YOUTHS' do. do.	**15/9**

SPECIAL LINE FOR THE MILLION.

MEN'S SERGE SUITS - - - - 17/6

Men's Serge and Tweed Suits, from	19 -
Youths' do. (age 12 to 17) ,,	11 -
Rugby Suits (age 9 to 12) ,,	7 6
Norfolk Suits (age 5 to 10) ,,	5 6
Sailor Suits (age 3 to 10) ,,	3 6

All orders to be accompanied by cheque or P.O. made payable to

The FACTORY CLOTHING Co.,
117, ALBION STREET, LEEDS.

Delighted customers send unsolicited testimonials as to value and style.
Pattern cards and self measurement forms sent on application.

Rippingilles Oil Warming Stoves

PATENT PRIZE MEDAL

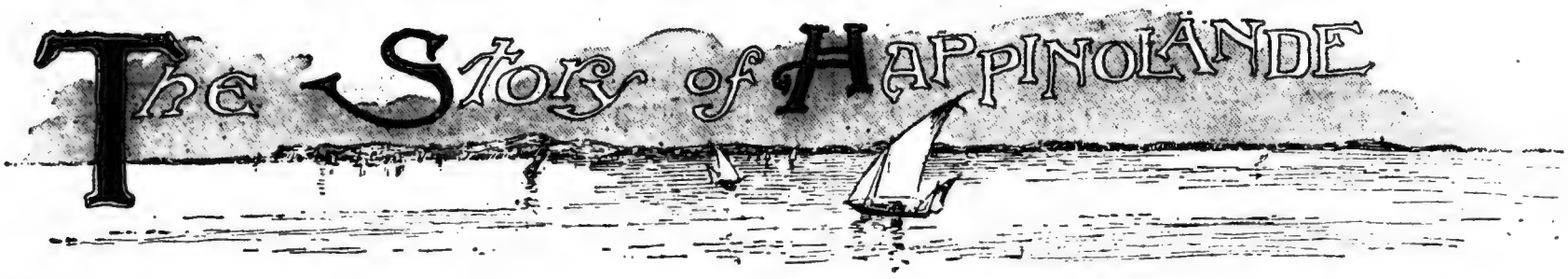
ODOURLESS, SMOKELESS, PORTABLE, SAFE, AND CLEANLY.

The Cheapest and most Effective means known for warming *Greenhouses, Offices, Shops, Bedrooms, Studios, Halls, Landings, &c.* and for keeping out frost and damp from apartments of every description.

They require no pipes or fittings, give off no injurious vapour to either vegetable or animal life, will burn from 12 to 24 hours without attention, and for Comfort, EFFICIENCY, ECONOMY, and UTILITY are UNSURPASSED.

They have received the Highest Awards wherever exhibited, proving them the BEST OIL STOVES IN THE WORLD. **Prices from a few Shillings.**

Sold by all Ironmongers and Lampdealers. Ask for RIPPINGILLE'S Patent, and take no other. Full illustrated List and name of nearest Agent forwarded free on application to Sole Manufacturers, THE ALBION LAMP CO. ASTON BROOK BIRMINGHAM.



Chapter I.

THERE are vast areas in the two great oceans of the world that are rarely crossed by the keels of commerce. It is in one of these unexplored spaces in the mid-Pacific that the island of Happinolande can be found by any one curious enough to search for it, and fortunate enough to discover it.

It lies, according to my authorities, within the temperate zone. It extends from east to west nearly a hundred miles, and varies in width from twenty to thirty miles. It is not as large as a continent, but it is big enough to hold within its sea-encirled shores a community of perhaps two hundred thousand souls.

Its surface is charmingly diversified with hill and vale, while a ridge running midway between its shores for twenty miles rises to the altitude of about three thousand feet, and is dignified in the popular tongue by the name of mountain. The shores of the island are sometimes rugged, with seamed and broken cliffs; sometimes they incline with gentle lines to stretches of white sand.

There are bays which give protection to storm-driven vessels, and sparkling rivers that flow from the mountains down to the sea. Superb forests stand on the slopes of the hills, and through the vales stretch fields ripe in their season with golden grain, meadows upon which browse the gentle kine, and orchards whose April blossoms fill the land with their odour.

At the eastern end of the island, on the shores of a noble bay, lies the capital, a city of perhaps thirty thousand inhabitants. White-sailed vessels cluster about its piers, spacious warehouses overlook its marts, while handsome churches and stately mansions give beauty to its thoroughfares. Within its borders abound those industrial and social activities that give vivacity to all congregations of men.

The people of Happinolande have not advanced in discovery as far as the inhabitants of other parts of the world. They still know no other means of conveyance upon the land than the vehicle or the saddle, or upon the sea than the bellying sail. Their machinery is still operated by hand, or by the power of the tides of the mountain streams.

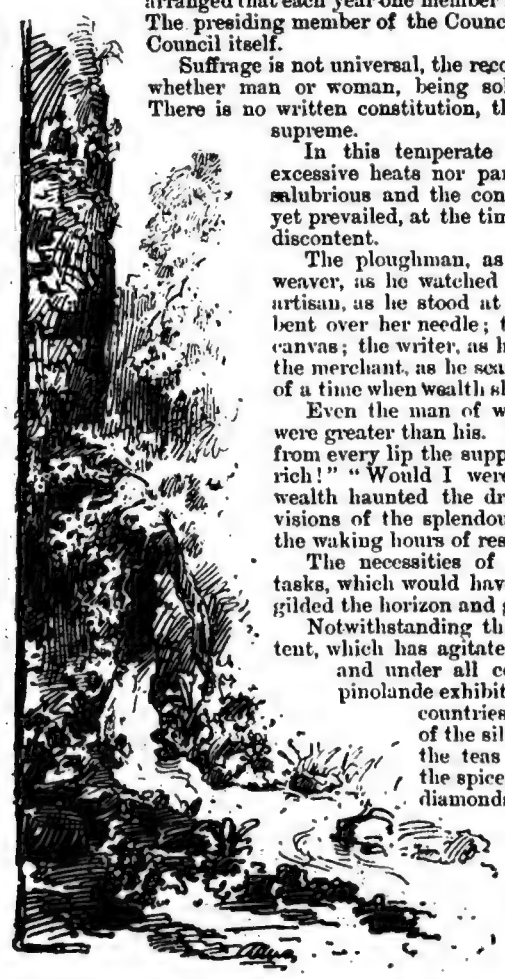
They have never heard the whistle of the locomotive or the mighty rattle of innumerable spindles, and yet their industries are not unlike those of other lands. They weave choice fabrics, they draw iron and copper and other ores from the mountain sides.

They plant the fields and grind the grain; they make pottery and bricks from various clays; they drag down from the hill-tops mighty monarchs of the forest, and deftly hew them into shape for use; their furnaces and forges make red the heavens at night; their vessels bring in the treasures of the deep.

In truth, Happinolande does not differ in any essential feature from countries familiar to us all. Men earn their bread by the sweat of their brows, and wealth rewards only those endowed with a spirit of industry and gifted with the genius to plan and command.

The government of Happinolande is based upon methods that have stood for centuries. There is a Council, consisting of fifteen members, whose terms are so arranged that each year one member retires and a new one is elected. The presiding member of the Council is elected bi-annually by the Council itself.

Suffrage is not universal, the recognised head of each household, whether man or woman, being solely entitled to the privilege. There is no written constitution, the edicts of the Council being supreme.


A narrow glen, bordered by cliffs several hundred feet high.

In this temperate island, oppressed neither by excessive heats nor paralysing cold, where the air is salubrious and the conditions of life felicitous, there yet prevailed, at the time of which I write, a profound discontent.

The ploughman, as he followed his plough; the weaver, as he watched his swift moving shuttle; the artisan, as he stood at his bench; the woman, as she bent over her needle; the artist, as he lingered at his canvas; the writer, as he paused with his wearied pen; the merchant, as he scanned his ledger; each dreamed of a time when wealth should give him ease and luxury.

Even the man of wealth brooded over riches that were greater than his. From every bosom rose a sigh; from every lip the suppressed whisper, "Would I were rich!" "Would I were richer!" Rapidly acquired wealth haunted the dreams of the sleeping worker; visions of the splendour that gold would bring filled the waking hours of restless spirits.

The necessities of each day drove men to their tasks, which would have been intolerable had not hope gilded the horizon and given promise of bliss to come.

Notwithstanding this longing, this spirit of discontent, which has agitated the human race in all climes and under all conditions, the people of Happinolande exhibited no disposition to seek other countries for wealth. They knew nothing of the silks of India, the ivory of Africa, the teas of China, the coffee of Brazil, the spices of the Spice Islands, and the diamonds of the Cape, the stores of gold and silver in Peru and Mexico.

They seemed never to have dreamed that distant far beyond their horizon lay countries open to the adventurous, with wealth for the reward of enterprise. Navigation with the mariners of Happinolande had never become a science.

They knew not the magnetic needle, they did not possess the compass, and hence they ventured in their small vessels, built only for transportation along the coast, or for their fisheries, but short distances from the shore; and remained, century after century, profoundly ignorant that other lands lie under the sun, and that the seas encompass a vast globe.

Happinolande had never, within memory of the people, experienced violent convulsions of nature. Earthquakes were unknown, cyclones and tidal waves had never wrought destruction upon their shores. The worst that had befallen them had been occasionally an excess of rain, and a few unimportant landslips.

The mountains, as are the mountains in all countries, were a resort for the people in the heat of summer. Hotels stood on elevated plateaux, cottages nestled in pleasant places. The people thronged to these uplands in order to sail upon the lakes, to wander through the glens, to visit the waterfalls, to view the grand prospects that were unfolded from many "coigns of vantage."

There was one favourite resort for all persons susceptible to the influence of pictures executed by the hand of Nature. This was a narrow glen, bordered by cliffs several hundred feet high, which rose from the level surface of the ground in nearly perpendicular lines.

The floor of this glen was almost level, and thickly strewed upon it were large boulders, or masses of rock, at some time displaced from the cliffs. At one end, where the walls of the glen came nearly together, an incline was formed thickly grown with trees and brush, through which ran swiftly down a stream of water that flowed gently through the centre of the glen.

In one memorable spring the rains were unusually heavy and were prolonged many days. The rivers, fed by the overflowing springs and the melting snows, rose to a fearful height, deluging the plains, sweeping away mills and barns, and well-stored products of the farm, and causing a consternation unprecedented in the annals of the people.

Rapidly acquired wealth haunted the dreams of the sleeping worker.

One night, when the rain came down in vast sheets of water, when the whole island was enveloped in a darkness impenetrable, the people living near the glen I have described were startled by a rumble so portentous and mysterious that they rushed to their doors and windows, straining their vision into the enshrouding blackness.

As they listened breathless with strained attention, wondering and trembling, a louder rumble broke upon the air. Then in an instant came a crash so appalling that screams of fright rent the air, and the cry went up from many tongues, "The mountains are falling!"

The impatient people, held within their houses by the darkness, could only speculate upon the mystery, and watch eagerly for the coming of the dawn. As the light began to appear, the rain ceased, the clouds lifted and began rolling away seaward, and presently the sun—so long hidden by the clouds—broke into morning splendour on the scene.

Before the sun had risen, many of the more inquisitive people were abroad, hastening to the scene of the catastrophe. For a time the clouds hung heavy upon the brow of the mountain, and the eager hurrying crowd could discern nothing definite.

The features of the mountain ridge, however, were too well known for any variation not to be discovered when once fully in view. It was not long ere it was seen that the cliffs at the entrance of the favourite glen had undergone a great change. "What has happened?" was asked from one to another.

A few mounted citizens sped on rapidly in advance of the rest, and presently they came in view of a remarkable transformation. The glen was no more. The cliffs on one side had slid or been precipitated into the glen, and large fissures on the other side showed that masses of rock had been detached and cast into the open space.

Not only was the glen filled with masses of broken rock, but at the entrance there had been an extensive slide, huge blocks of granite having forced their way several hundred feet into the valley.

The islanders were not content to look at the strange scene at a distance. They soon hurried forward, and the more adventurous began climbing over the fallen rocks. It was difficult, but not impossible, to strong limbs and an eager spirit, and a new feature was soon added to the picture in the dark figures struggling amid the disordered mass, ascending the rocks wherever it could be done, reaching the top of what seemed to be fallen towers and pinnacles.

Continually the crowd of spectators increased. The roads, although heavy with the recent rains, were soon alive with vehicles, with mounted men, with eager pedestrians, coming from all the country round, pushing forward to the scene. For some hours this continued. Thousands upon thousands crowded all the approaches, and spread with eager curiosity over the ruins.

In the midst of it all, while the people stared and wondered, and talked breathlessly of the event, a new and unexpected murmur came down from the spectators on the pinnacles, and spread from mouth to mouth.

The agitation of those who heard it was remarkable. Some turned pale, others became flushed; from many a great cry broke forth, and impetuous persons made sudden rushes up the fallen escarpment, as if to reach some point beyond. As the whisper spread, it seemed to sway the gathered multitude as if a strong wind had blown upon them; but it was an agitation of surprise, not of terror; of mingled delight and wonder, not of apprehension.

What could a whisper so portentous mean? What was the message? What word could there be capable of striking men breathless, paling their cheeks, or sending the blood bounding through the veins, and filling them with a new frenzy?

"What is it?" cried those who beheld the excitement and knew not the cause.

"What is it?" echoed from mouth to mouth on the outskirts of the multitude.

Is there more than one word potent enough to stir the foundations of feeling, to set the heart beating violently, to expand the eye in incredulous amazement, to

THREE HALF CROWNS

IT IS A STARTLING FACT that **Three Half-Crowns (7s. 6d.)** will purchase a beautiful **SERGE DRESS LENGTH** in any of the following colours: Black, Blue Brown, Green, Claret, Nut brown, ..., Mulberry, Ruby, Red, Brown, Moss, Olive, Myrtle, Bronze, &c., also several very pretty and effective mixtures.

FULL DRESS LENGTH (Carriage paid) for **7/6**

Money returned if not approved. **20,000** Sets of Patterns now ready. Write to-day. Patterns Post Free and need not be returned. These beautiful Serges are specially manufactured for Autumn and Winter wear, elegant in appearance, and are not heavy as most serges are. They will not spot with rain or wear threadbare.

£5,000 to be GIVEN AWAY.

Particulars of Presents to be Given Away will be sent with each set of Patterns. WEARWELL CLOTH, 10s. 6d.; IDEAL CLOTH, 15s.; ZUPER CLOTH, 17s. 6d.; FANCY CHECK TWEEDS, 12s. 6d.; BROKEN DIAGONAL and HOPSACK TWEEDS, 16s. 6d. the full Dress Length. New Autumn and Winter Patterns of all these Dress Materials are now ready and may be had Post free. Cloth Table Covers, Emerald, Crimson, Claret, or Tan, 2 yds. square, 4s. 9d. each. Remnant Bundles of Serge, 5s. and 10s. each, Carriage Paid. Write to-day for Patterns and address in full.

We have Thousands of Testimonials equal to this.

From Mr. E. Ford, Daisy Cottage, Market Street, Eastleigh, near Southampton. *June 13, 1891.*

Gentlemen,—My wife desires me to thank you for the quality of your cloth. Having had several dresses from you she finds that the Quality cannot be excelled, for in wear the dress looks well to the last, and its durability is equal to three ordinary dresses. This may seem an exaggeration, but it is the sober fact. Enclosed please find P.O.O. for 17s. 6d., for which please forward one of your Zuper Dresses as per pattern, also enclosed.

LUTAS LEATHLEY & CO., (Dept. 55) The Dress Warehouse, ARMLEY, LEEDS.

DR. WILSON'S HAIR RESTORER.

The Best Preparation in the World.

NEVER FAILS TO RESTORE THE HAIR TO ITS Natural Colour and Beauty.

IT CAUSES A LUXURIANT GROWTH.

Price 1s. per bottle; Large Size, 1s. 6d. per bottle.

From all respectable Hairdressers and Chemists in the Kingdom.

Wholesale only:

PARTON, SON, & CO., BIRMINGHAM

HINDE'S HAIR CURLERS.

Hinde's "Pin point" hair pins are also worth worthy of attention.

Bright Metal.

IN 6d. AND 1s. BOXES.

OF ALL HAIRDRESSERS

DRAPERS, AND FANCY

HOUSES IN THE

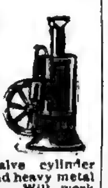
THREE QUEENDOMS.

USED WITHOUT HEAT.

HINDES LIMITED, MANUFACTURERS OF HAIR BRUSHES & TOILET ARTICLES LONDON & BIRMINGHAM.

J. THEOBALD & Co's Specialities.

NIGGERS' WIGS.—Reliable quality, 1s. 3d. and 1s. 9d.; best with rising tuft, 2s. 6d. and 3s. 6d. Collars, white or striped, 1s. 2d.; best frilled, 2s. Cuffs, small, 1s. 2d.; large and frilled (coloured, 1s. 6d.), white, 2s. 3d. Fronts, 1s. 6d.; best quality, 2s. 6d. Special black for faces, &c., 1s. 2d. Bows, 1s. 2d. Umbrella Cases, 1s. 2d. Coats, 5s. 6d., 6s. 6d. Waistcoats, 4s. 6d. Trousers, 5s., 6s. 6d. Crepe Masks, to fit face, 4s. Nigger Masks, male or female, 1s. 6d., 2s. 6d. Book Nigger Dialogues, &c., 1s. 2d. Bones, 1s. 2d., 1s. 8d., 2s. 6d. Clappers, 1s. Banjoes, 4s. 6d., 6s. 6d., 7s. 6d. Tambourines, 1s. 2d., 1s. 9d., 2s. 6d. Masks, Wigs, Costumes, Make-ups, of every description, see list.

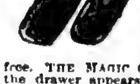


THE FARRINGDON VERTICAL STEAM ENGINE.—Will work any kind of model. Strong brass boiler, steam pipe, cylinder, furnace, platform, fly-wheel, and pulley wheel complete; free 1s. 6d. Larger sizes, more elaborately fitted, 2s. 6d., 3s. 6d., 5s. 6d., 7s. 6d., 10s. 6d. THE CELEBRATED CHAMPION SLIDE-VALVE ENGINE.—Intensely powerful, with large side-valve cylinder eccentric, crank, and shaft, and heavy metal boiler, fly-wheel, pulley, &c. Will work three or four models at one time; 5s. 6d. free. Best quality, 10s. 6d. Any of the above Engines will work the following models, which are 1s. 6d. each, or three for 4s.—Model Lathe, Grindstone, Saw Bench, Planing Machine, Drilling Machine, Fountain, Water Mill, and Dredger.

THE CITY WATCH.—Thoroughly reliable. Keeps excellent time. Keyless action. Either silverine or goldine case, 5s. post free. Silverine or Goldine Chains, very handsome 1s. Real Silver Watches, 12s. 6d. Lever Watches, 25s. Splendid Lever Clocks, in nickel-silver cases, 2s. 6d.; with alarm, 3s. 6d. The "Palace" Timepieces, very elaborate, 7s. 6d., or with musical accompaniment, 12s. 6d.

VENTRILOQUISM.—All about it and how to do it, 1s. 2d. Magic and Mysteries, Conjuring Tricks and how to make them, 1s. 2d. Thought Reading, the real secret, 1s. 2d. Tricks with Cards, 1s. 2d. Mesmerism, 1s. 2d. Readings and Recitations, 1s. 2d. Riddles and Jokes, 1s. 2d. Amateur Theatricals, 1s. 2d. How to read Heads, 1s. 2d. How to read Faces and Tell Characters, 1s. 2d. Home acting, 1s. 2d.

THE MAGICIAN'S CABINET, containing 10 good Conjuring Tricks, 1s. 3d.; boxes of larger tricks, 1s. 3d., 2s. 9d., 5s. 6d., 10s. 6d., 21s., 42s. All the following tricks, 1s. 2d. each: The Magic Purse no one can open but owner; Magic Cap and Halfpence, money changes to a die; Wizard's vanishing Egg and Bag; Secret puzzle Match Box, impossible to open without the secret; Puzzle Snuff Box. Thousands of other tricks, see Catalogue.



THE INSULTING CIGAR CASE.—You offer your friend your case of beautiful cigars, and directly he attempts to take one, they spring off and a head with fingers to the nose appears, 1s. 2d. free. THE MAGIC CIGAR CASE, in which the drawer appears full of choice cigars when you open it yourself, but when anyone else does so it is quite empty, price 1s. 2d., or better quality in real leather, 2s. 2d., large size 3s. THE MAGIC FUSEE CASE, which no one can open but the owner, 1s. 2d., in black and gold 1s. 8d., in brass 2s. 2d., silver plated 3s. MAGIC SNUFF BOX, which no one but those in the secret can open, 1s. 2d. ELECTRIC FUSEE CASE, silver plated, anyone trying to open this not in the secret receives electric shock, 1s. 8d.; superior quality engraved, 2s. 8d.

OUR CELEBRATED CHRISTMAS BOX PARCEL OF NOVELTIES.

COMPRISES, as it always does at this time of the year, the most extraordinary value for money. An assortment of goods suitable for Christmas Presents and New Year's Gifts, and sufficient entertainment and amusement for an entire evening party, as well as containing many useful articles. The Package consists of one nice Leatherette Writing Case (fitted with note paper, envelopes, and blotting paper), also six Christmas Cards. Magician's Conjuring Book (twelve complete changes in every book), one japanned case of moist water colours, one Punch and Judy Show, one complete box of Picture Cubes, a large assortment of Dolls and Fancy Figures (with dresses all made to fit together and take off and on), complete Race Game in colours with race-horses, three splendid Panorama Books of Tableaux illustrating Clowns at the Circus with scenes in the ring, Aladdin or the Wonderful Lamp, and Babes in the Wood (there are on an average about twenty-four different figures to each one of these Panorama Books), three splendid Games, one entitled All Round the World, consisting of a series of Pictures from the different countries of the Globe, with instructions for playing; another called the Regatta Game, a series of sea-side pictures and out-door scenes; one Black Peter Game; also one box of Japanese Expanding Flowers, Animals, &c.; one box containing the celebrated Japanese Fish Game, double jointed fishing rod, and five Japanese Fish; two splendid sheets of models, comprising selections from churches, barracks, houses, and windmills; and one large 1s. Toy Book. The complete lot, carriage free, for 2s. 6d.

MODEL STEAM ENGINE AND FERRIS WHEEL complete, showing exact model of the celebrated Ferris Wheel, and worked by a powerful Brass Vertical Engine, 1s. 6d. free. SCREW STEAM LAUNCH, 1s. 6d.; larger sizes at 2s. 6d., 3s. 6d., and 5s. 6d. ENGINE AND WATERWHEEL, 1s. 6d. ENGINE AND STEAM HAMMER, 1s. 6d.

SELF LIGHTING POCKET LAMP.—In Nickel Silver; press a knob and the lamp lights itself, charged for 100 times, 1s.; Extra charges, 1,200 1s. POCKET FLASKS, 1s. COMBINATION TOOL, 10 tools in one, 1s. PRINTING PRESSES with type complete, 2s. 6d., 3s. 6d., 5s. 6d., 10s. 6d., 15s. INVISIBLE INK, for secret correspondence, 1s. 2d.

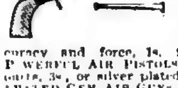
WORKING MODEL STEAM LOCOMOTIVES.—Guaranteed. With large japanned boiler, cylinder, and four wheels, 1s. 6d. THE "FARRINGDON," with beautiful brass boiler, steam whistle, cylinder, and four wheels, 2s. 6d., greatest bargain ever offered, JAPANNED LOCOMOTIVE, with flanged wheels, starting lever, safety valve, and double cylinders, larger size, 5s.; with whistle, 5s. 6d.; 6-wheel ditto with dome, &c., 8s. 6d. ALL BRASS LOCOMOTIVE, very powerful, with whistle, water tap, buffers, steam tap, safety valve, 2 cylinders, and 4 flanged wheels, 8s. 6d.; 6-wheel, larger ditto, 10s. 6d. Powerful 8 WHEEL EXPRESS LOCOMOTIVE with all fittings, and backward and forward motion, 30s. Complete set of WORKING RAILWAY SIGNALS, with levers, &c., 2s. Engine parts of every description. Locomotive with tender, carriages, and set of circular rails, in case, 17s. 6d., 35s., 40s. Carriages and Trucks with flanged wheels, 1s. 6d. each.

THE STEAM WORKING COBBLER.—Powerful Engine with Brass boiler, steam pipe, oscillating cylinder, fly wheel, pulley wheel, &c., mounted on handsome stand, with working model of a Cobbler. Most marvellous invention. Complete, carriage free 1s. 6d. The following steam models also 1s. 6d. each; or if 3 Engines are ordered at a time, 4s., Engine and Nigger playing Banjo, Fire Engine, pumps water as well as runs along, Steam Road Car, Agricultural Threshing Engine, Steam Crane, Steam Tricycle.

MAGIC LANTERNS AND SLIDES.—Beautiful Japanned Magic Lantern, with paraffin lamp, reflector, chimney, 2 powerful lenses, fitted on platform complete, with 24 comic figures, warranted to show well, carriage free 1s. 6d., larger sizes, with 50 figures, 2s. 3d., 3s. 6d., 5s. 6d., 7s. 6d., and 10s. 6d. Immense varieties of Lantern Slides, from 8d. per doz. See Catalogue, all sizes and kinds up to £40 each. Special bottles of Luxor Lantern Oil, 10½d. and 1s. 6d.

OUR GRAND CHRISTMAS PARCEL OF SCRAPS.

Containing 250 Scraps, all beautifully coloured, and the majority of them handsomely embossed—Birds, Animals, Figures, Seascapes, Landscapes, Houses, Flowers, Comic Pictures, Photos of Celebrated People, &c.; and with every Parcel is given gratis, the Celebrated Picture Book, containing 6 Panorama Pictures, illustrating Punch and Judy performance throughout. Price 1s. 3d., carriage free. No. 2 Parcel containing 600 Scraps, in much greater variety, and giving, in addition, 4 of the celebrated Toy Books illustrating John Gilpin, Mother Hubbard, Three Little Kittens, Jack and the Beanstalk, or other similar subjects. Price 2s. 6d., carriage free. SCRAP ALBUMS.—A good strong Scrap Album, emblazoned in gold and colours, 6d., post free 8d., larger size, 1s., post free, 1s. 3d.



THE DEFIANCE HARMLESS PISTOL, with four darts, very powerful. Fires with great accuracy and force, 1s. free. SPLENDID POWERFUL AIR PISTOLS, with slugs and darts, 3s., or silver plated, 4s. THE CELEBRATED GEM AIR GUNS, with slugs, darts, targets, &c., complete, carriage free 21s. SALOON RIFLE GUN, for shooting with cartridge at bottles, balls, &c., as in rifle galleries, 8s. 6d. carriage free. POCKET PISTOL to fire cartridges, 4s. 6d., free. SIX CHAMBER REVOLVERS 6s. 6d., silver plated 7s. 6d. BULL-DOG REVOLVERS, five chambers, central fire, 8s. 6d.

ARTIFICIAL FROST FOR CHRISTMAS.—In boxes, 6d., 1s. 2d., and 2s. 6d. Spangles for costumes, &c., assortment, 8d., 1s. 2d., 2s. 6d., and 5s. Witches' Mask, 1s. 6d. Father Xmas, 1s., with beard, 1s. 6d. and 2s. 6d. Theatrical make-ups 2s. 6d., 5s. 6d., and 10s. 6d. Japanese Lanterns, from 1s. doz. to 1s. each. Fairy Wands, 1s. 6d. and 2s. 6d. Donkey, Bear, Cat, Wolf, and other Masks, best quality, 1s. 6d. and 2s. 6d. Entertainments provided Limelights, &c.

THE MULTIGRAPH Copying Apparatus for printing any number of copies of programmes, bills, cards, &c., writing can be washed off and graph used again at once, postcard size, 1s. 3d.; notepaper, 2s. 6d.; larger, 5s. 6d. and 10s. 6d. complete. The KILO LIQUID for taking copies on to ordinary paper of pictures, &c., appearing in newspapers, magazines, exact reproductions, 1s. 2d. per bottle.

GRAND ILLUSTRATED XMAS CATALOGUE, 60 pages, 1d. Novelties of every description. Skates, Lanterns, Tricks, Puzzles, Clockwork Toys, Electrical Novelties, Steam Engines, Boats, Games, Microscopes, &c. SPECIAL LARGE MODEL ENGINE CATALOGUE, 3d. SPECIAL LARGE MAGIC LANTERN CATALOGUE, 3d. and 6d.

The Celebrated Bijou Magic Lanterns and Slides.

THESE sets carry the palm over all others. Each set is packed in a handsome box. The lanterns and all of the slides are of superior English make. These are specially got up so as to form nice presents, and will give satisfaction everywhere.

No. 1 Set comprise a best English made Lantern, fitted with two lenses, paraffin lamp, glass chimney, silvered reflector, 40 really Comic Figures, on 12 long slides, 3 complete Nursery Tales, each Tale having 12 pictures on 4 Slides, making 36 more pictures, 2 Comic Slipping Slides, 2 Moving Panorama Slides, 1 "Good Night" Slide, 2 Lever Slides, 1 "Welcome," 1 Man Swallowing Rats, 2 Chinese Fireworks Slides, 1 Rackwork Slide, 1 Queen and 1 Curtain Slide, making 100 pictures in all, complete with instructions, giving a picture on the sheet of 3 feet diameter. Price 10s. 6d.

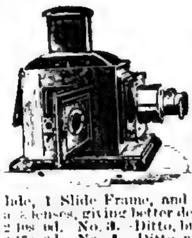
No. 2 precisely similar, but having a No. 2 Lantern and No. 2 Slides, forming a larger size throughout. Gives a picture 4 feet in diameter. Price 15s. 6d.

No. 3 size, much larger still, very suitable for a special present, gives a 5 feet diameter picture. 21s.

Bottles of SPECIALLY PREPARED OIL, giving great brilliancy, 9d., 1s. 6d., and 2s. 6d.

THEOBALD'S SPECIAL OFFER OF RELIANCE MAGIC LANTERNS AND SLIDES.

5,000 SOLD LAST SEASON.



We would draw particular attention to this set, as one which we have made up specially for the use of churches, missions, schools, and for the household. Comprising: a full-size Magic Lantern, which takes all full-size slides, and with a large variety of various subjects, charging for the complete set about half the price which these articles would cost if purchased separately. As will be seen, we have received a large number of testimonials from various newspapers, commenting favourably on this set, and we have every confidence in recommending them as being certain to give every satisfaction.

No. 1. Set.—Comprises: a full size Reliance Lantern, japanned body, made with a powerful 2-wick mineral oil lamp, a 4-inch plano-convex condenser (that is two condensing lenses of 4 inches diameter each), double combination rackwork front (which means 4 front lenses fitted in a brass nozzle), with rack-work adjustment. This Lantern will give a clear picture on the screen of 10 to 12 feet in diameter. With each Lantern we give 4 sets full size of 12 coloured slides, and the subjects can be either Scripture, Travel, Temperance, or Nursery Tales, £2 5s. 0d. Also half-dozen Comic Movable Slides, 1 Rackwork Chromotrope, 1 Good Night, and 1 Welcome Slide, 1 Slide Frame, and Lectures complete. No. 2.—The same assortment of slides, but with a Lantern having extra large lenses, giving better definition, and also having a flash cap to the front so that the light can be shut off when required £2 10s. 0d. No. 3.—Ditto, but the lantern fitted with brass sight hole, and with brass sliding tubes (The "Eclipse" Lantern), £2 17s. 6d. No. 4.—Ditto, with Russian Iron Lantern, very superior, £3 5s. 0d. No. 5. The same variety of Slides, but having a lantern fitted with a polished mahogany body, with a door to open at the side, and also with a massive brass front, £3 15s. 0d. No. 6.—Fitted with a very best mahogany bodied Lantern, with a 4-wick Lamp, with moulded and very elaborately finished brass work of superior quality (The "Superb" Lantern), £5 0s. 0d.

The *Penny Illustrated Paper* says:—"Large and powerful. Wonderfully improved." *Christian Age* says:—"Latest ideas; beautifully finished. Certainly a *speciality*." *Methodist Times*:—"Really excellent." *Christian Globe*:—"Most perfectly got up at a marvellously low price." The *Lady's Companion*:—"Have much pleasure in recommending. Extraordinarily cheap." *Lady's Pictorial*:—"Excellent. A really serviceable apparatus." Dozens of other testimonials. Thousands of Lanterns and Slides kept in stock. Apparatus of every description. The Cheapest House in the world. Send for Special Illustrated Magic Lantern Catalogue, 3d. Lanterns and Slides Lent on Hire. Purchasers will much oblige by cutting out and sending the Coupon with their order.

PEARSON'S COUPON.
Entitles holder to one Coupon Reliance Set at above price.
(Signed) J. THEOBALD & Co.

Local Depot: 20, Church Street, Kensington, London, W. Head City Warehouse, to which Address all Letters—

THEOBALD AND COMPANY, 19, FARRINGDON ROAD, LONDON, E.C.

Established over Sixty Years.

Telephones 8597 and 5767.

thrill with delight and expectation, to open suddenly fascinating visions of earthly paradises?

"What is it?" repeated a thousand voices. "What is it?"

The air seemed to vibrate with the reply. One word leaping from innumerable lips with infinite variety of expression and inflection, with rapture, with wonder, with yearning, with doubt, with awe—one word—

"Gold—gold!"

"Not gold!" was the wild response, and then followed breathless, incredulous exclamations:

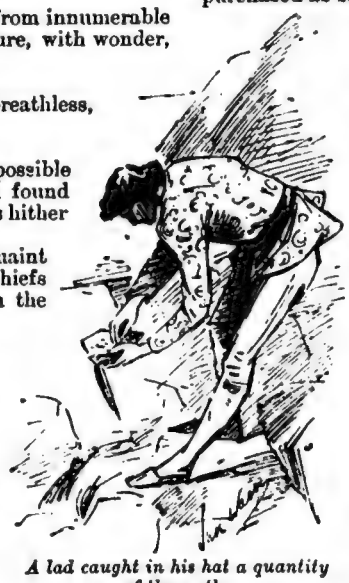
"What gold! Plenty of gold for everybody!"

This breathless wonder, this astounding good fortune, this impossible miracle, at first spoken of breathlessly, as if it were incredible, soon found expression in cries, in exclamations, in shouts, in tumultuous rushes hither and thither. The people were inflamed one by another.

The agitation increased as it extended. They hurried to acquaint each new comer with the wonderful news; with hats and handkerchiefs they endeavoured to signal the startling intelligence to friends in the distance, while mounted men were seen dashing off to carry the good news afar. The people were ablaze, and no wonder.

It was all true, and true without exaggeration. The rocks uncovered by the great slide were seamed with gold. It was obvious at a glance that the mountain held an immense quantity of the precious metal.

No one knew, of course, how far the veins extended, but everyone could see that riches untold lay within the grasp of the community. Speculations as to the proper method of treatment were soon rife. But, while in the midst of the discussion, signs of a new commotion were apparent in the multitude gathered at the foot of the fallen rocks.



A lad caught in his hat a quantity of the earth.

It will be remembered that in the description of the glen mention was made of a small stream coursing through its centre. Swollen by the incessant rains, this stream had become a mountain flood, which now, forcing its way through the *débris* of rocks and earth that had fallen in its channel, emerged below, a discoloured and turbulent torrent.

A lad, watching the stream, hastened forward and caught in his hat a quantity of the earth which the water was depositing in its course. As the water escaped from the extemporised vessel, the small quantity of earth that remained was seen to hold sparkling crystals of metal. In an instant this was known. A dozen persons sprang to the bank and began gathering in their hands, or by any other available means, portions of the earth brought down by the torrent.

In a moment an exclamation was heard, and one of the explorers held between his fingers a small nugget of gold. The cry was caught up, and spread swiftly right and left.

In an instant almost there was a wild and tumultuous rush to the bed of the stream. Cries of "Gold!" "Nuggets of gold!" rang in the air. People were overthrown in the wild scramble and trodden underfoot, while screams of pain mingled with exultant shouts.

A scene of madness, over which let us draw a curtain.

Chapter II.

The Council acted with promptitude. Within a few hours after the intelligence reached them, a strong police force was despatched to the mines—as the gold-bearing rocks were called—and the Council itself went in a body to visit the scene, and verify by personal observation the extraordinary story current in every circle.

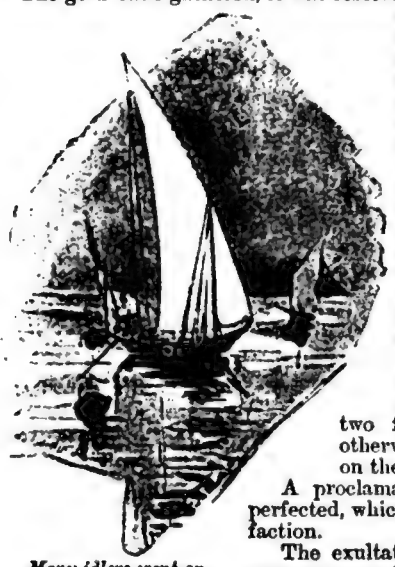
The next day they met to deliberate upon the course to be pursued. Notwithstanding the unprecedented character of the subject, they soon substantially agreed upon what should be done.

Fortunately the mountains had never passed into the hands of individual owners. The State had purposely retained possession of the entire elevated ridge in order to control the forests that covered its sides, and regulate the cutting of timber. The new-found gold belonged, therefore, to the State.

But a treasure so great was obviously far beyond the needs of the government, and it was realised that the people would never be content to see this vast wealth lying idle in the government vaults. They would expect and demand some form of equitable distribution by which each member of the community should obtain a direct personal advantage from the national good fortune.

A plan was speedily devised by which this might be brought about. It was determined that the government should take exclusive possession of the mines, and organise at once a systematic method for extracting the metal from the rocks.

The gold thus gathered, it was resolved, should be placed in the public treasury, and negotiable certificates of shares be issued, which should be distributed equally among the people, without regard to age or sex; and, in order to ascertain the exact number of aggregate shares required, a census was ordered to be taken with as little delay as possible.



Many idlers went on fishing excursions.

The shares were to be issued at monthly intervals, the amount corresponding with the amount of metal gathered during that period. These shares could be redeemed either in coin or bullion, at the option of the mint. This proviso was necessary, as it was seen that it would be impossible for the mint to issue coins as rapidly as they would be required.

Being, moreover, negotiable, it was believed that the shares would circulate to a considerable extent as currency, and these two features of the certificates relieved what otherwise might prove an embarrassing pressure on the mint.

A proclamation was issued as soon as the plan was perfected, which appeared to give the people general satisfaction.

The exultation of the people in their marvellous discovery was, naturally, very great. It could not be expected, after such an event, with all the dazzling promises for the future it involved, that men and women would settle down at once to their ordinary vocations. It was only natural that a general restlessness should ensue.

The streets of all the towns and villages became thronged with idlers, and everywhere groups of people could be seen eagerly discussing the great theme. The factories were occupied only by those who came to talk; the loom of the weaver, the bench of the carpenter, the plough of the husbandman, were generally abandoned.

The shops, however, were open, and crowds of restless people sauntered through them, speculating upon their contents, and selecting articles that should be purchased as soon as the coveted gold came into their hands. Trade still went on in a somewhat uncertain way. Tradesmen were no less agitated by the discovery than the wage-earners, but the promised wealth did not make it less desirable to convert their accretion of goods into money.

There was some partial return of the people to their various employments after a few days; but occupations of all kinds were pursued in an intermittent and irregular manner during the weeks that followed. But when, at the end of the month, the first distribution of shares took place, there was again an almost universal abandonment of work.

The first issue entitled each citizen to an amount of gold equal, in our coinage, to about twenty pounds. The distribution was accomplished effectually, with little confusion. A number of depositories had been selected, according to the political sub-divisions of the country, and each man obtained his share without disorder.

It was confidently believed that the yield of the mines would increase as they were worked, and that a sum equal to £500 a year would fall to every man, woman, and child on the island.

At first, the suspension of labour was not different from that which occurs on every holiday. But, as on the second, the third, and the fourth days after the issue of certificates the indisposition to work continued, numerous inconveniences occurred.

Even on the second day, many of the people of the capital, accustomed to have milk left at their doors, were deprived of this beverage at breakfast. The dairy farms from which the milk came had been so depleted of labourers that it had been found impossible to more than milk the cows. The elaborate and long established system of distribution could not be operated.

There were not sufficient means for sending the milk to town, and the few cans that did arrive could not be utilised, except to a small extent, as nearly the whole body of distributors failed to appear at the appointed time. Long obliged to rise before light and to go forth to their task, regardless of cold, snow, or rain, the certainty of support without labour quickly induced them to abandon the distasteful pursuit.

On the second day, people were startled to find half the bakers' shops closed. By eight o'clock in the morning not a loaf of bread could be purchased at any shop in the city. On the next day still fewer shops were opened, and the supply was considerably less. As a consequence, there was a demand for various cereals, as hominy and Indian meal, such as are sold at the grocers.

But on the fourth day the available supply of these articles was nearly exhausted, and then the flour warehouses were besieged for wheat and rye. Housekeepers, who for years had depended on the bakeries, were compelled to relearn the art of bread making.

A great deal of difficulty was experienced in transporting flour from the warehouses to the family domicile. Trucks could not be hired, except to a very small extent, but, as bread was indispensable, many a paterfamilias struggled homeward with his bag of flour in a borrowed wheelbarrow or hand-cart.

Fires must be lighted . . . rooms swept . . . . by fair damsels.

On the fifth day no fresh fish was obtainable. No vessels had gone to sea for fish since the issue of certificates; and if the fishermen who cast their nets in the various estuaries had drawn new supplies, none had come into market. As catching fish is considered by the amateur a pleasure rather than a task, many idlers went down in boats on fishing excursions, and hence a few tables at least were not deprived of this edible.

On the sixth day there was a marked scarcity of fresh meat. The butchers had slaughtered the fatted cattle in the stock-yards, but no beeves came up from the country, and the butchers, once rid of their cattle and meat, were as much disposed as others to fall into the ranks of the idlers.

One serious inconvenience arose in many families from the entire cessation of domestic service. The cooks, the butlers, the maids, the stable-men, departed one by one, here and there an ancient servitor alone remaining at his post.

Great was the concern in all the homes of the wealthy. Wood must be hewn, water drawn, cattle fed, horses groomed, boots polished, by hands unused to manual labour; fires must be lighted, meals cooked and served, dishes washed, rooms swept, and even the washtub accepted, by fair damsels who had known household labour only by name.

It was as if these people had suddenly become poor, as if their wealth had vanished instead of being augmented. They realised, as the whole community would come to realise, that wealth means nothing unless it can buy service—unless it can command labour and the products of labour.

On the seventh day, intelligence of a very startling character came from the agricultural districts. The discovery had occurred in the spring, just before the planting season, and so general had been the exodus of agricultural labourers that it was now said to be impossible to get seed into more than a very small proportion of the area usually planted.

This was very alarming, for it was clear to the most indifferent that unless the fields were planted and the harvests gathered, the very foundations of life would be cut away. Above all things, there must be food. So obvious was this that efforts were made to organise parties of volunteers to go to the aid of the farmers.

Something was accomplished by this means, but it was impossible to replace, by irregular forces of undisciplined men, a system of labour which time had built up, and which had been gradually adjusted to the requirements of each district.

The farmers themselves, moreover, in many instances, proved obstructive; for they, too, had received their certificates; they, too, brooded over the store of gold in the rocks and the treasury, and, so long as enough was planted for their own needs, they felt no inclination to plant for others.

There were grain and flour enough in the warehouses to last for many months, but not enough, it was feared, to feed the people until the harvests of a second summer could be gathered. What, then, would become of them when the food supply gave out?

The Government soon discovered that voluntary labour could not be depended

upon for the mines, and it was determined to draft men for the purpose. Each district was required to furnish its quota. Inasmuch as everybody thought the working of the mines of more importance than everything else, no resistance was made to this arbitrary proceeding.

As this enforced service was not more than a few weeks for each person, many volunteered to go. In order to obtain supplies for the mine, it was necessary to resort to further arbitrary means. Teams could be hired for the purpose of transporting the articles required, but teamsters had to be conscripted.

By these energetic measures the labour at the mines went on, and the brilliant dross poured into the treasury. Could it all have steadily flowed into the sea the Happinolanders would have had boundless cause for gratitude.

It is needless to trace the effects of the great discovery through all the vocations of the community, for all experiences were alike. A few persons not carried away by the craze nor infatuated with dreams of pleasure, still gave some of their hours to labour; but the rest were determined to enjoy their wealth according to their inclinations, and considered only what new pleasures might be taken up.

In this manner the months passed. It was impossible for any member of the community not to feel the evil of the general derangement; but each man hoped that others would take up their tools and implements again and leave him to his pleasure.

The inconveniences that multiplied daily were felt more acutely by the better classes—better, so called—than by the multitude. So long as there was enough to eat, the latter cared little. The supply of fuel, however, was rapidly diminishing, and the urgency of filling the coal-yards and the wood-yards before the winter snows was apparent to everybody, but no one seemed to know how to set the requisite machinery in motion by which this end could be accomplished.

That which in former seasons came naturally and as a matter of course from the operation of social forces, apparently without any man heeding or planning it, seemed fairly unobtainable now in a community that daily boasted of its wealth—of its immense good fortune.

There was also a rapidly diminishing supply of fabrics; and prices for cloth and linen, for blankets and carpets, had greatly advanced. This was also true of leather, of shoes, of wooden and iron utensils, of illuminating oils, of paper—of what, indeed, was it not true?

By spring there was much distress. People were suffering from scant food, from insufficient clothing, from scarcity of fuel. Labour could now be obtained readily, provided payment was made in needed articles. Gold was practically useless.

Teamsters, for instance, would refuse to fetch or carry for money, but would cheerfully undertake arduous tasks for a bushel of potatoes, a hundred-weight of coal, a few pounds of wheat or maize, or a quarter of mutton. Unhappily, few could offer payment in articles which their own needs required.

And now new sources of unhappiness arose. The streets in all the towns had, by necessity, been left unswept; refuse had accumulated, and, with the first warm suns of spring, fever broke out.

It spread rapidly, finding its victims everywhere, in ill-fed, lowly vitalised people. Especially dreadful were its ravages among children. Nurses were difficult to obtain; milk and other much needed articles could not be purchased at all. Its force was not spent until the return of winter frosts.

Surely, it may be said, the people could return to their work, and thus remove these evils. A few did so. Here and there a blacksmith's forge was once more lighted, or the weaver's shuttle could be heard again; but the foundations of the interlaced industrial system were broken up, and these pioneers could obtain useless gold only for their labour.

There were no products with which to exchange, no immediate reward for their exertions, no inducement to labour until a common necessity and a common purpose animated all.

Many townspeople desired to go upon the land, realising that in this return to primitive conditions, every man must plant and harvest for himself if he would escape starvation; but, while land was abundant, very few homesteads could be obtained, and new habitations were impossible so long as the magicians of the spade, the trowel, the chisel, and the hammer refused to exercise their skill.

Meanwhile the mines were worked, and the gold daily accumulated in the vaults of the treasury. Fields may lie fallow, workshops may be empty, want may stalk abroad, but still the precious product of the rocks, adorable, world inspiring, is gathered in its temple.

Oh, mighty potency of gold! Its evolution is a land where every man is rich and every man famished.

CHAPTER III.

THE treasury certificates were commonly held by their owners for future use. Bullion was not convenient and of little practical use, and coin issued by the mint, seized upon as rapidly as produced, redeemed but a very small part of the certificates. The coinage was necessarily obstructed by the lack of skilled workmen; a few, however, were kept steadily employed by special inducements.

Citizens who kept their accounts at private banks generally deposited their certificates with their bankers, which, at frequent intervals, were presented at the treasury for redemption; but much the greater part of the treasure brought from the mines remained in the public vaults.

The public buildings stood near the lower boundaries of the capital, directly on the borders of the bay, just as the Parliament Houses at Westminster rise from the edge of the Thames. The public treasury, which stood apart from them, was a structure of ordinary character, constructed of stone and brick, its foundations resting upon the gravelly formation of the locality.

This building, with which was connected the mint, had sufficed for the modest needs of the State before the great access of wealth; but, when the gold from the new mines began to fill its vaults, it became obvious that a building more ample and more substantial was necessary. Plans for such a structure were prepared, and excavations began on ground adjoining the old treasury, but the general cessation of labour arrested work upon it.

It was now near the anniversary of the great discovery. It had been raining for three days and people remembered the excessive floods of a year ago that preceded the overflow of the rocks in their favourite glen. "Would there be as heavy rains this spring?" was asked; but no prophet would answer with certainty.

It continued to rain steadily, increasing in violence, until, on the sixth day, there was a flood not unlike that of the year before. The rivers ran high, and the streets of the capital were in many places inundated. The wind had also risen, and tides of unusual height threatened the safety of some of the buildings standing at the water's edge.

The public treasury stood at the foot of a street having a rather steep incline. The water that poured down this street in heavy rains was like a mountain torrent. About a hundred feet above the treasury a culvert was constructed, the arched passage leading directly to the bay, passing not more than a dozen feet from the treasury.

Unfortunately—or was it fortunately—a portion of the culvert had sunk, and the entrance to the passage was obstructed by a mass of stone and brick collected at its mouth. An attempt had been made to repair the damage, but the labourers had forsaken their task; and, as with innumerable other things since the discovery, "not done" were the words that should have been written above it.

The water that now poured down the street was turned from its course by these obstructions, and, soon tearing a channel in the centre of the thoroughfare, hurried onward, dashing directly at the walls of the treasury. No one at first supposed that any danger to the building could arise from this cause.

But the momentarily swelling flood from the continued heavy downfall of rain, the masses of gravel and boulders that were swept before it, the fact that the earth on one side of the foundation was yielding to the watery pressure, and being swept into the excavation made for the new treasury, began to arouse apprehensions in the few hardy persons that had ventured to the spot.

Word was despatched to the Council, and then everyone looked about to see what could be done. The hour was so late that all the usual inmates of the building had departed. The doors were closed, and the building stood silent and dark as the waters gathered at its foundations.

The tide was now at flood, and had risen several feet above its usual height. Tossed by the wind, the waves dashed against the walls of the building, and seemed to be angrily assaulting it, while, at the same moment, the torrent from the street charged upon it with fierce endeavour.

The public buildings.

Suddenly, as it were, the sand, and the boulders, and the very ground itself, seemed to bear down upon the structure. Timber, borne upon the stream, dashed against it; the flood rose as if to encompass it; and then was heard a loud crash.

A cry went up from the agitated spectators, for a fissure in the walls was visible, extending from the base upward. In an instant more it had widened, and now the flood rushed through, assailing the walls within as well as without.

What happened then? Was there another slip? Was there an upheaval? Was there a subsidence? No one knew, no one could tell. The earth seemed to rise; it seemed to sink. The building could be seen tottering, as if in the hands of a host of enemies; there was another loud cracking noise, and a part of one of the side walls fell in; another moment and the rear was seen yielding to the pressure; and then the solid structure, amid rain, and flood, and wind, and the shifting earth, was hurled, broken into many fragments, headlong into the tossing bay.

The torrent rushed furiously over its foundations, sweeping before it stones and fragments left, and in a moment more nothing could be seen but a roaring flood—nothing remained but the vision of a building that was not.

The consternation of those who witnessed the catastrophe was indescribable. They stood in breathless amazement, and then rushed with what speed was possible in the blinding rain, carrying the appalling intelligence to all their little world, that their treasure, their indestructible talisman, that at a touch had banished the necessity for labour; had opened to their eager vision ages of felicity; had transformed them from creatures of poverty into magnates of wealth, was lost, lost—for ever lost!

It was at first supposed that much of the gold could be recovered. Some experimental diving and dredging showed that a small portion might be saved, but the cost would be greater than the returns would justify. The flood and tide had done their work well, and scattered the shining treasure afar over the bed of the bay and the bottom of the sea.

The lamentations of the people at the loss were modified somewhat by expectations of further yields from the mines; but two days after the catastrophe a proclamation was issued by the Council which dissipated these hopes.

This proclamation declared that it had become evident for some time that the rocks were not holding out as well as had been expected, and that greater labour would hereafter be required in the extraction of the precious metal.

No further public distribution, therefore, would be made. The mines would still be worked, and the proceeds held for the uses of the State.

The surplus over the State expenses would be employed in repairing roads and bridges, in paving streets, in perfecting systems of sewerage, in building school-houses, establishing hospitals, forming libraries, opening public parks, aiding the investigation of science, encouraging the fine arts, and promoting the higher welfare of the community. It ended by urging the people to return to their former vocations.

How far the decline of the gold yield justified this great change cannot be said. It was known that the members of the Council had looked with grave apprehensions upon the general industrial paralysis, and many of them had openly asserted the necessity of a change in the public policy.

It was even intimated that the Council was not wholly innocent of the treasury catastrophe. How came it, it was asked, that a substantial building should yield so easily to a light flood? Had not the Council dramatically prepared for the accident? Was it not possible that some stones of the foundation had been secretly loosened from within, and the way prepared for the inrushing flood?

It was also wildly whispered that the Council had secretly made away with the gold before the catastrophe; else, how is it, it was asked, that as the precious dust was held in stout canvas bags, none of them could be found lodged at the bottom of the sea? A few persons muttered to themselves that, if the Council had, in any way been instrumental in the disappearance of the gold, the wisdom of their proceeding was unimpeachable.

Notwithstanding these speculations, these doubts and distrusts, and not a little fierce grumbling, ere many days signs of a wholesome change became apparent. The gold was gone, and men soon saw the necessity of returning to labour.

By midsummer, what a change! The fields of grain were ripening in the sun. The roads were thronged with wains piled high with the products of the mill and the factory; the busy ships flew before the wind, and the factories beat with the pulsation of contented labour.

THIS is the tale of the queerest Christmas I ever spent. It was while I was travelling in America a few years ago, and I shall try and tell the story just as it occurred, with all the local colouring I can get into it, for I like to think of it best like that.

There were few passengers in the Pullman car, for who would travel so near Christmas time.

There was an English gentleman, myself, then a stout, red-faced cattle owner from Texas, who looked indifferently at the snow, for his cattle were safe in warmer latitudes; there was a slight young college boy, going home for a holiday; and three pretty girls on the same happy journey.

Of course, the coloured porter was there, and the dignified conductor, conscious of his becoming uniform. Two of the girls were sisters, Nelly and Fanny Dwight; the third was a friend, Harriet Lawrence, known as Harry. They were bound for their homes in Denver.

"I can't see a thing but snow," said Fanny, flattening her nose against the glass; "and my! ain't the plains lonesome? The snow will be jolly, though, in Denver; it's so rare, too. Maybe we can go sleighing. I like snow at Christmas."

"It's too bad we couldn't get home till Christmas Eve," said Nelly. "Think of all these delays! I thought we never should start."

"I wouldn't miss Christmas at home for anything," said Harry, "the children like it so; but the snow makes it more pleasant and—and Christmassy," she finished.

The old Englishman listened to their chat half sadly—it seemed a long way back to his Eton days. The cattle man looked out of the window; the young man tried to look old, and as if he thought that the girls were very young indeed; the porter went to sleep in a corner; but the conductor was for ever on the move, and went in and out of the car in a worried way.

Meanwhile the merry snow fell faster and thicker in great matted flakes. It clogged the wheels, dropped into the smoke-stack, hung defiant and dripping to the big red light, curtained the little windows, drifted on doors and steps, and then, joining the wild, shrieking wind, flung barrier after barrier across the roadway before the panting iron horse that fought it so bravely.

"A merry, snowy Christmas!" shrieked the wind in its riotous glee. All the passengers were asleep, they did not even know that the train had stopped. Only the lynx-eyed conductor and sleepy porter knew that the train was snowed in at Dover Station, the forlornest speck of a place in all that forlorn region.

"And we shan't be home even Christmas Day," moaned Harry, when she looked on the wide snow-covered landscape, "and snowed in here when there is nothing but a coal station and—a dugout," she concluded, seeing a little dark mound in the snow where a woman and boy were shovelling a path.

"You'd oughter be thankful, Miss," said the porter, with the interest a well-paid Pullman porter takes in the young lady in his care. "Ef we'd been snowed in out on the plains, we mighter froze. Terrible cold, too. Two winters ago we was froze up out dar, and I 'clar ter goodness, if they hadn't a dug us out when they did, we'd a hed to burn up the wood-work of de car."

Of course that possibly made life more endurable at Dover Station. Every one on the car had a lunch basket, so, with plenty to eat, and warmth, the imprisoned passengers were not badly off, though, of course, as Harry said frequently and pathetically, "What a place to spend Christmas."

They talked, played checkers, and got acquainted with the other sufferers, except the young man, who really was the most restless of all.

Late in the afternoon, Harry proposed a walk out of doors. Neither Fanny nor Nelly cared to venture, so Miss. Harry, well coated and rubbered, followed by the obliging porter, took a survey of Dover Station. There was only a bare little station house, a big coal shed, and, some way back, the dugout.

"I have never been near those," said Harry, "I have seen them so often from the car window; let's go over."

The porter meekly followed.

"'Deed, miss, dey is all alike. Nuffin but a hole in de ground wid a door."

Harry, very rosy and scared, knocked at the door.

"Come in," said a faint voice.

They stepped down, pushing back a light fall of snow that followed. At first the room was so dark that they could not make out what was in it. Then Harry saw a bed with comforters, a box with a few broken dishes on it, a rusty stove filled with glowing coal, and near the stove five little children, sitting on some straw on the floor. There were three boys, the oldest, perhaps, ten, one eight, and one four, a girl of twelve, and a baby girl of two years or so, all neat and clean but pitifully poor.

"Oh," said Harry, quite overcome; "do you live here?"

"Yessum," said the oldest boy, respectfully; "did you come in the train?"

"Yes, but not alone?" said Harry; "you, I mean. Haven't you parents—father or somebody?"

"Oh, mother's up to the station for coal," said the boy. He had a pale, thin face, and a queer, oldish way. "I usually goes, but my feet's got chilblains, and Liza's has too. Mother had to go, you see, but I'll be better to-morrow."

Harry sat on the box and looked at the five with wide tearful eyes. They were so thin, so sad looking, and they seemed so old. Had the child been crushed out of them? Even the baby gazed into the red fire with a dull, quiet face.

"She don't never cry," said Liza timidly, blushing under Harry's gaze; "mother says she's got that to be thankful for. She's sich a good baby."

"I've heard of these folk," said the porter; "they come here about six months ago. Woman's husband come to this country first, sent for 'em, and they come over here. Dover Station she said he'd writ on a card; but she's lost it, and he wa'n't never heard of here.

"David Fay was his name, and they hadn't no money to go on, and she said he'd come and find her, so she stayed on here in the old dugout, waitin' for him. Does washin' for the section hands, helps the woman at the station, the telegrapher's wife, and jest keeps from starving. A nice little woman, too. If her man had deserted her, the state-prison ain't none too good for him."

"Father will come, if he is alive," said the boy gravely. "We expect him every day. I am David Fay, junior, miss."

"I am sure he will," said Harry, quickly. She was dazed and bewildered at their misery. Her grief over a lost holiday seemed so silly and trivial in the presence of real trouble.

"Come here," she said gently, "you poor little things."

The sad Sammy, four, and Jimmy, eight, went up to her. They had neither shyness nor interest. They let her pat their cheeks and show them her watch, and Sammy sat in her lap.

"It seems," said Harry, "as if you'd all been frozen little dead children. Where is all your life? Do you never play or sing?"

"It's hard to keep warm, and our clothes is so thin we has to stay indoors," said Liza, shifting the baby to her left arm. "We hasn't much to laff at, for we're worried 'cause mother is. It seems like a funeral allus. We works, though, to help mother."

"We kin sing, though," said Jimmy, with a passing gleam of animation.

"Please do, please sing," said Harry.

With no hesitation they immediately stood in a row—David, junior, at one end, Liza with the baby at the other, the two smaller boys in the middle. In that orderly line, with no embarrassment, no childish giggling or hesitation, they sang in shrill treble, "Onward, Christian Soldiers!" Each sad little face was earnest, rapt, and quiet. They held each other's hands, and the baby looked on in awe-stricken admiration. They sang four verses, and retired to their seats unmoved by Harry's praise.

Near the stove five little children, sitting on some straw on the floor.

"We learned it at a mission school," said Liza.

"Here's mother," cried Jimmy. Harry jumped to her feet, rosy and stammering. The pale, little woman, in the faded calico, with such a thin shawl, looked at her very kindly.

"I saw you go in," she said shyly. "I was glad, for the children is so dull like. You was snowed in?"

"Yes," said Harry. "I did not mean to intrude in your house; it was very rude ——"

"You was welcome," said the woman, "don't be put out about it. Was the children singing for ye?"

"Yes, very nicely," said Harry, recovering. "I am glad I came here. I felt bad at losing Christmas at home, but yours are such real troubles."

"You feel yours, though; and 'tis too bad," said Mrs. Fay. "A young lady wants to be at home at such times. Yes, mine's the deep water, and it's a sad Christmas for the children that had set on being with their father in the new country."

"Why," cried Harry, suddenly, "I don't believe they know about Santa Claus." It had struck her with overwhelming force that there were children who did not know the dear old Christmas saint.

"They don't," said the mother. "We was terrible poor in Lunnun; but Jimmy, Liza, and David, junior, went to mission school and got candy off trees at Christmas time; but I never told them the rest. My mother used to tell me about Santa Claus, though, when I was a little gal, and I'd hang my stocking up, and there was suthin' in it—allus suthin' in it." Her wan face brightened at the remembrance.

"Tell us 'bout Santa Claus, please," said Jimmy, at Harry's side.

So she told them the story of the Christmas good man, of his team of reindeer, his well-filled sleigh, and how he came down chimneys or trotted in at doors and windows to fill good children's stockings on Christmas Eve. "And they used to tell me," finished Harry, "that if I listened, I'd hear faint, but ever so clear and sweet, the tinkle of the reindeer's bells."

"Sounds beautiful, just like a book," said the mother.

The sober little children were all at the girl's feet. They listened with grave, believing little faces, and parted lips. A child's bright light dawned in each child's eye.

"Good-bye, now," said Harry, "it's getting late. To-morrow I'll come back."

She hurried out, the porter following.

"Oh, dear," said Harry; "I had to hurry away to cry. The poor little things and their sad song made my heart ache."

She looked back, and saw Jimmy at the door of the dugout, looking wistfully out over the plains, as if expecting the reindeer and Santa Claus to come, or to hear in the still frosty air the musical tinkle of the magical silver bells. It was a pathetic picture, that forlorn little figure against the dreary background of the earth hut.

The moment Harry got back to the car, Nelly and Fanny were taken into a corner for consultation. The girls were all up bright and early the next morning, and the willing porter was sent into the baggage car with a message.

"I know I shall get what I want," said Harry, with much dignity, though secretly afraid, "for my father is one of the directors of this road."

The young ladies were allowed to go into the baggage car to get their trunks, and when at ten o'clock the Englishman made his appearance, he found the three girls very busy sewing and chatting, while the cattle man looked out of the window and the college boy looked longingly at the merry party,

"What is going on?" asked the Englishman.

Then Harry, with bright eyes and flushed cheeks, told of her visit the day before and her plan. The cattle man listened now, and looked out at the dugout with much interest.

"Well, well," said the Englishman, "you are wonderfully kind young ladies. Yesterday I heard many complaints and sighs, to-day I hear merry laughs and plans. It isn't so bad, then to be snowed in at Christmas-tide?"

"Oh, yes," said Harry, honestly; "but this, you know, made it different. You see, Nelly and Fanny made their mamma a wrapper in sewing class—this grey one with the blue bows. We've made it shorter, so it will just fit Mrs. Fay. Nelly knows her clothes are so thin. Fanny thought we ought to take the bows off, but I want them left on. Poor people have so few of the pretty things of life.

"Then I have two brothers about the age of the small Fay boys, and Fanny has a brother as big as David, junior, so, as it will be too late for our presents at home, we are going to give them to the Fays. Then we are going to give some of our own things to Liza. But I declare, there's the baby; we have forgotten her!"

The two gentlemen listened with amused interest, but the lad had disappeared. Pretty soon he came back, looking rather red. He had a parcel.

"Here's one of those dolls you can't break. I got it for my sister's baby, a two-year-old; it will do for the baby at the dugout. And here's a little fur cap sister sent for. I can get her another."

"Don't be too generous," said Fanny, shyly.

"Not at all," stammered the lad. "Sister's baby has too many things now. It made me feel bad hearing of those poor people; but please let me go along with you when you give the presents."

Santa Claus, in fur coat and cap and mittens.

"We are going over after the children are asleep," said Harry.

"I have an idea, you know," said the Englishman; "last year, in England, I played Santa Claus for my niece's children, fur cap and coat—made up a little. The children were wild. Now, why couldn't I assume the character of Santa Claus, and all the party can go over and spend Christmas evening at the hut, and see how the children enjoy the gifts?"

Of course, Harry was delighted, and sent over to the dugout to have the children ready and awake at eight o'clock. So, at the time appointed, a merry party left the car, and an outsider would never have thought that they were snowed-in passengers, obliged to spend Christmas at Dover Station. The dugout was neatly swept, and the row of solemn children were sitting on a box. Mrs. Fay found the guests seats—and the three girls, conductor, and the lad—while the rest were to follow.

"I wish I had more of a rig, a fur coat, you know," said the Englishman, preparing to set out.

"Here," said the little cattle man, "here is my buffalo overcoat, just the thing."

"It's quite a lark," chuckled the Englishman.

"Yes, sah; dem young leddies best I ever see," grinned the porter.

So the three, well laden with bundles, and followed by the station-keeper's wife, went on to the little dark mound in the snow.

"It's him! It's him!" shouted Jimmy, when the knock came. "I never heard bells; but it's him—the Claus!"

How their little hearts beat, their eyes widened. How they breathed fast, and held each other's trembling hands. Oh, it was worth a girl's sweet charity. It was worth a Christmas at Dorev Station to see the happy joy in those joyless lives. Then he came—a Santa Claus in fur coat and cap and mittens. He had an armful of bundles, too, and he called out in a jolly voice:

"Here's a gold pin for Liza, a sash, a pretty apron, and a book.

"Here's a cap and a doll for baby.

"Here's a horse, a wooden one, for Sammy, with a train of cars, and a top.

"Here's a knife and blocks and marbles for Jimmy.

"Here's a knife, a book, and a fine scarf for David, junior; and here, best of all is a pretty dress for Mrs. Fay, that Santa Claus's two young lady friends made themselves, and right handsomely it is put together."

"Oh, I never could take it," sobbed Mrs. Fay.

"But Santa Claus brought it, mother," said Jimmy, soberly.

"Yes," cried Nelly, "and you will look so pretty in it."

Then the station-master's wife hurried the trembling little woman into the other room to put on the gown.

Then Mrs. Fay came in, rosy and smiling.

"Here's candy, lots of it," went on Santa Claus; "and now, porter, set the table. Mrs. Brown of the station-house and I have arranged a supper. Ha! ha! a turkey, jelly, pie, and coffee. Now, draw up, everybody, let's eat, drink, and be merry."

Then Mrs. Fay came in, rosy and smiling, and looked so young and pretty in the dress, that everybody complimented her till she blushed like a rose. The porter waited at table, and then sat down by the stove on a box and ate his supper.

Suddenly there was a long, shrieking whistle. Everybody started.

"I'll go and see," said the college lad.

The dugout was so close and tight they did not hear the incoming train, nor know that rescue was close at hand. Strong hands of many men had raised the blockade, and a special from Denver steamed slowly into Dover Station.

"Where's my Harry," cried a big, grey-haired man. The college lad guessed who he was, and told him.

"Bless her dear heart!" cried her father. "My generous girl; and the others, all well?"

"Snowed in here, at Chris'mus," said a sad-looking man, one of the snow shovellers. He was resting on his shovel and heard Mr. Lawrence say. "It's a sadder Chris'mus for a man that's got a wife and five children lost in this big world."

Harry's father said "Yes," half heeding, but the lad caught the sad-looking man's arm.

"You can't be —— you are!" he cried, wildly. "I knew it. Don't think me crazy. Aren't you David Fay?"

"Yes, sir; why, what's the matter?" said the man, confusedly.

"Come; come, quick!" shouted the lad, dragging him off to the dugout, whither Harry's father was hurrying. "You will call this the happiest day of your life!"

"It's papa!" cried Harry, "and we can go home."

"Mrs. Fay, Mrs. Fay!" shouted the lad, flinging open the half-shut door. "Here is the best Christmas present of all. I ought to break it gently, but I can't; it's too good to be true."

He had no time for more words; the frightened woman saw who it was, and there was such a meeting—the long separated husband and wife, and the children.

Dover Station never saw such a glimpse of happiness before or since. Then there were explanations of letters astray, and the curious fact that David meant to write to Denver, but wrote to Dover instead, and his wife sailed in another steamer from the one expected, and all the accidents and incidents that will lose untravelled people of small means in the wide world.

"We must go now," said Mr. Lawrence, and so the party broke up.

"I haven't done my share of the Christmas yet," said the cattle man, awkwardly, during a pause in the leave taking; "but, speaking frank in our western way, I like your looks, Mr. Fay. If you're out of a job and want one, I can give you a place on a ranch of mine, where is a good house, and nigh a town where there'd be a school for the children. Your wife, here, is as good as a whole trunkful of references, and the children is, too. Seventy-five dollars a month, and found. Will you come?"

"Where?" said Fay, bewildered.

"I'm Jim Porter, of Texas; my brand the double Y. If you've never heard of me, there are plenty who have hereabouts."

"I'll take your offer, sir. I hain't no regular job now," said Fay, gratefully; "though I could a got 'em, but I worked on from place to place to hunt for my wife and children; but them found, sir, I kin be as stiddy as the best."

"I'll fix a pass for you," said Harry's father.

"And here," said the Englishman, laying a roll of bills on the table; "here is something to help you get ready. Don't thank me, it's Santa Claus, you know, and he never is thanked."

"I'm glad she had the new dress on, and looked so pretty when he came," whispered Fanny, on the way to the train, "and the children weren't so forlorn."

The college lad went on to San Francisco, the Englishman to Hapan, the cattle man to Texas, the conductor and porter over the same old route, the happy girls to happy homes, but all looked back with bright refreshing remembrances on that little oasis in the desert of life—the queer Christmas at Dover Station.

THRESHOLD OF SUCCESS

THE door swung to behind me and I went upstairs thinking of nothing more serious than the cobwebs which floated lazily from the ceiling. Absorbing preoccupation is among the best cures for anxiety. Perhaps! But I had nothing to occupy my thoughts except the cravings of an empty stomach, and my mind abhors a vacuum. I am a child of Nature.

The sun streamed in through the little window above the rotting street door and warmed my back as I climbed. My fate had been decreed. I would no longer try and fight against the miserable circumstances which poisoned my work in the eyes of the world. My finest effort had been refused by an unæsthetic publisher, who was not a fit judge for anything which was worth appreciation. It was to go where all the others had gone, into the waste paper basket.

The man had had the impudence to tell me to my face that the market value and the intrinsic value of a story were two different things. Ugh! What a confession to make. I hate that man who will sacrifice an artist's work to foster public taste.

The stairs grew harder to climb the higher I went. I shivered as I turned a corner and left the sunlight behind me.

There were no cobwebs up there, but the walls were damp, and I wondered how long I should live. I stumbled twice, but if I bruised my skin I did not feel any pain. I had never realised before how hard it was to breathe.

What an effort it is to remember to open and shut your lungs. Three or four times I nearly forgot all about it and sank down on the stairs.

I wondered why Ethel did not come down and help me. Perhaps she was busy. It was too much exertion to laugh, but the satire was certainly funny. There was some satisfaction in feeling that she, too, was a failure like me.

At last I reached the door and pushed it open. The room was just as I had left it. The window was half open and the gentle evening breeze was playing with the precious sheets of paper, covered with blots and corrections, from which I had copied my story. Ethel was lying on the shabby little sofa, her face buried in her hands.

It was wrong of me to be glad because she was crying, but I liked to see her tears. At least there was someone else in the world who shared my misery.

"Paula," she said, "Paula, what do you think has happened?"

I threw my hat down in a chair and sat down to take off my boots.

"Don't," I said with a sob. "It's much better not to think about it."

She crossed over the room slowly and with one hand pressed to her heart. Her brown eyes were burning with a strange light, and a bright colour had mounted to her cheeks, giving back the beauty which sorrow had wasted.

She knelt down by my side and hid her face on my lap.

"Don't," I said, again. A sudden gust of wind blew the sheets of my manuscript all over the room. A sweep had just come round the corner, and I could hear his feet shuffling on the pavement as he called, "Sweep, sweep, sweep!"

She raised her head and I pushed back the brown curls from her forehead, and kissed her.

"Paula," she said slowly, "they have given me five pounds for my interview."

I sprang to my feet, pushing her roughly away.

"What?" I cried, standing over her with my fists clenched and stamping my foot on the ground.

"What?" I cried, standing over her with my fists clenched.

I saw her great eyes fill with an expression of horror, and then it changed to pity.

"Aren't you glad, Paula?" she asked, the colour fading from her cheeks and leaving her whiter than before. "I thought the news would make you happy."

"Happy!" I laughed mockingly. "Happy to find myself left behind in the race. Happy indeed! To see you saved from this life of misery while I am sinking. Ethel, I hate. I——"

She raised her hands imploringly.

"Don't, don't," she moaned. "Oh, Paula, Paula," and then she fainted.

I thought she was dead. Remorse seized me. I ran to our bedroom and filled a glass with water, and sprinkled it on her forehead. I bent over her and fanned her with my handkerchief.

At last she opened her eyes and then shut them again. Thank heaven my cruelty had not killed her.

"It is kind of you," she whispered gratefully; "I'll be better in a minute. Give me just one drop of water."

I held the tumbler to her lips. She tasted it, and then turned away.

I felt her head grow heavier on my arms. Then I lifted her up and carried her to a sofa, crying a little to myself. The doctors say you should not lift a person who has fainted, but I should have fainted too if I had waited there.

In half-an-hour she was herself again.

We sent the landlady out to buy us a loaf and a pot of jam. The good woman brought them in with a kettle of boiling water, and we sat down to tea. This was the first good meal we had tasted for a week.

* * * * * *

There was not a breath of air in the streets. Even the fountains seemed depressed, and the backs of the lions in Trafalgar Square were scorching hot.

I put down my parasol and crossed over to the shade on the other side of the Strand. It was too much exertion to hold the thing up. It was almost too much exertion to walk, and I would have given anything to have sat down somewhere and had a good cry.

Ethel was so busy with her writing now that she hardly knew which way to turn for time. I was doing the errand boy for her. Bah! I felt like a fallen monarch adorning the triumphal march of a Roman Emperor through the capital, or something like that.

I was on my way to the City, and I fancied the passers-by must guess my mission. In my pocket was a proof of the hateful article which had brought my sister work, hateful though it saved us both from starvation. I would rather we had starved together than that I should live on the dregs of her charity. "A Chat with Frederick Ward, Millionaire and Philanthropist," cooked from some extracts he had sent her, and some questions he had answered by post.

He was too busy a man to waste his time with an interviewer, and he regarded journalism in the light of a frivolous joke. However, he had promised, in the kindness of his heart, to correct the proof and to make it a little up to date if she brought it round. I had offered to take it for her because I wanted something to do. I needed employment to keep me from the gruesome company of my despairing thoughts. I could not sit at home and watch her work with that look of sublime contentment on her face, which instantly changed to pity when her eyes met mine fixed upon her greedily.

I reached the office at last.

"The last door on the right is Mr. Ward's room," the clerk said, and he spoke with a touch of reverence. Then he left me alone.

I pushed open the door nervously, and stood face to face with a fat, red-faced old gentleman in his shirt sleeves, who was cleaning his nails with a small ivory penknife. I retired precipitately.

"Come in, come in," he said, quickly, but I gave him time to struggle into his coat before I ventured inside.

So this fat little man with small blue eyes and white whiskers was a celebrity. I had seen plenty of others like him in the streets that morning. Appearances, it seems, have nothing to do with the power of making money, nor is genius stamped on the face of everyone in the vanguard of his profession.

Mr. Ward placed a chair for me by the side of his desk, and I think there was something in my appearance which pleased him, for the stern, commercial look on his face relaxed, and he smiled a little as he held out his hand for the proof I was dragging from my pocket.

He took the long galleys and looked at them curiously.

"I have never seen a proof before," he said, half apologetically, as he turned the long slips over and glanced at the other side.

Then he tilted his chair back and began to read. I watched him eagerly. He began with a smile of amused condescension; an interview with him! what a jest! But as he read on his face grew serious, his teeth closed with a snap, and at last some specially neat turn of phrase brought his chair down.

After that he laid the proof on his desk and bent over it eagerly, muttering contentedly to himself, and sometimes smiling in amazed approval. I don't think he ever realised before what a great man he was, or how much better a man's life looks in print than it does in mental review. It always spoils the effect to know too

BROOME'S MUSIC

2d EACH POST FREE

13 Copies Sent Flat per Parcel Post for **2/-**

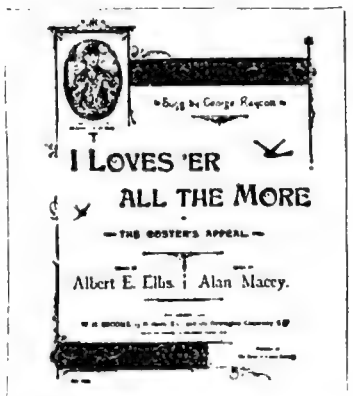
FULL MUSIC SIZE AND GUARANTEED CORRECT.

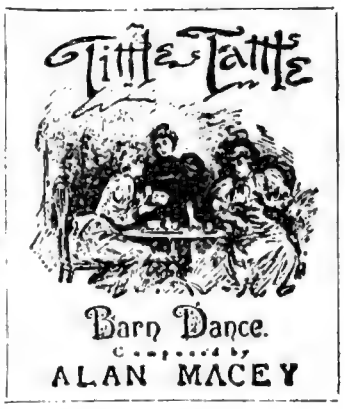
If ordering through your local Music Seller ***SEE*** *that the name* **"BROOME"** *is on* ***EVERY*** *copy.*

13 Copies Sent Flat per Parcel Post for **2/-**

2d EACH POST FREE

250,000 CUSTOMERS, AND EVERYONE PLEASED.





Songs.

All new numbers printed in capitals.

Those marked * have a separate accompaniment for Banjo.

640. **MARY MAY.** By Alan Macey. A Sweet Song, one of the gems of the list.

CHORUS.

Sweet Mary May, she's a little darling,
Neat Mary May, she sings like a starling.
Why should we tarry, she's named the day,
I mean to marry sweet Mary May.

632. **TWO LITTLE GIRLS IN BLUE.** (See Illustration). Printed on 3 sheets of paper.
633. **LITTLE PUGGY NAILER.** Grand Song for a Smoking Concert.
635. **I LOVES 'ER ALL THE MORE, or the Coster's Appeal.** Pretty melody with chorus in Waltz time. (See Illustration).
631. **OH! WHAT TIMES THEY MUST HAVE BEEN.** Good comic with rattling chorus.
623. **IN HONOUR'S CAUSE.** (See Illustration.) Pretty tenor song.
628. **After the Ball.** (Illustrated). On 3 sheets.
577. **An Old Sweet Greeting,** in F.
578. " " " " " G.
579. " " " " " B.
565. **The Reason Why,** in B. (A pretty, humorous song.)
586. " " " " C.
463. **What are the Wild Waves Saying.** Vocal duet.
569. **Maggie Murphy's Home.** (Illustrated.)
567. **Diver** in E. } Printed on 3 sheets of paper,
568. " " F. } beautifully illustrated in black and white.
471. **Arab's Farewell to his Favourite Steed.**
484. **Where the Sea Breaks.** (Illustrated.)
529. **Rock a bye Baby.**
530. **A Soldier and a Man.**
531. **Clementine.**
542. **There is a Tavern in the Town.**
546. **Gipsy Countess.** (Vocal Duet.)
10. **Anchor's Weighed, The.**
408. **Barney, take me Home Again.**
49. **Call me Back Again.**
55. **Chiming Bells of Long Ago.**
78. **Down by the River Side I Stray.**
123. **I Dreamt that I Dwelt in Marble Halls.**
470. **I'll Take You Home Again, Kathleen.**
427. **Little Peach in an Orchard Grew.**
203. **Old Folks at Home.** (Swanee River.)
435. **She's the only Girl I Love.**
411. **Song that Reached My Heart.**
253. **Starlight Nell.** J. W. Cherry.
207. **Then You'll Remember Me.**
442. **When the Leaves Begin to Turn.**
441. **When the Robins Nest Again**
410. **Who's That Calling So Sweet.**

Pianoforte.

All new numbers printed in capitals.

622. **TITTLE TATTLE BARN DANCE.** Alan Macey. (See Illustration.) By the composer of the world renowned **Impudence Schottische.**
624. **WOODLAND ELVES.** (See Illustration.) A sweet lilting melody.
630. **DARIOLA.** Graceful Dance. L. Gautier. In this celebrated composer's best style.
629. **After the Ball.** Waltz, by Joseph Tabrar. Title beautifully illustrated, printed on 3 sheets of paper.
580. **An Old Sweet Greeting.** Waltz, by L. Gautier. The most pleasing waltz of the present season.
576. **Willow Pattern Polka.**
571. **March of the Goblins Blue.** Lively.
527. **Old Gold.** A very pretty polka.
517. **Whispers of the Tree Tops.**
524. **American Lancers.** Popular melodies.
573. **Dear Old Chums Polka.** Very pretty.

Pianoforte.

All new numbers printed in capitals.

624. **Impudence Schottische.** Alan Macey. The most successful Schottische or Barn Dance ever published, 37,000 copies sold, sale increasing weekly. (See Illustration.)
641. **DIGNITY GAVOTTE,** companion to **Impudence Schottische.** Sweetly pretty.
637. **SWEDISH BRIDAL MARCH.** L. Gautier. pretty and up-to-date
638. **POLISH MAZURKA.** L. Gautier. Pretty and up-to-date.
630. **TWO LITTLE GIRLS IN BLUE WALTZ.** Same illustration as song, on 4 sheets of paper.
620. **Sprites by Night.** (See illustration.) Dainty, a melody that haunts you.
581. **Take Your Partners Schottische.**
583. **Geneva.** A graceful dance by L. Gautier.
584. **Country Wedding Barn Dance.**
572. **Pretoria Entracte.**
574. **Fire Away Galop.**

W. H. BROOME, 15, HOLBORN, LONDON, E.C.

Music Printer and Publisher.

IS OBESITY THE RESULT OF RICH DIET?

Fat begins to accumulate as soon as the system has attained its full development, and will go on increasing, if not checked, until the decline of life; then it ought again to decrease. Independently of the importance of fat as a non-conducting substance in impeding the too rapid escape of animal heat, it may be regarded as a store of material to compensate for waste of tissue under sickness or other circumstances entailing temporary abstinence from food. Most writers consider that obesity is promoted by a rich dietary, corporeal inactivity, tranquility of mind, &c.; and, although admitting these to be conducive to the formation of fat, I am of opinion, writes Mr. F. C. Russell, the eminent specialist on "Corpulency and the Cure" (256 pages), which is the title of a book now going through the press with the eighteenth edition, that obesity arising from such causes solely is comparatively rare. There is a diseased state of the system which independently of all these influences will increase the production and deposition of fat. We are of this gentleman's opinion. Mr. Russell, however, does not leave his readers who suffer from obesity "in the lurch," for he prescribes a remedy, and a most effectual one too, consisting solely of herbs, which do not contain a particle of any deleterious ingredient, and yet he can reduce a person's weight from 2lb. to even 10lb. a week without having to swallow nauseous physic or resort to drastic measures. This successful combination of vegetable extracts was not obtained without considerable research and painstaking investigation. It is rather pleasant to take, three small doses will in many instances reduce from 1lb. to 3lb. in the short space of twenty-four hours. However, the cost of the book is only 4d., and can be obtained direct from Mr. Russell, Woburn House, 27, Store Street, London, W.C. There are matters highly interesting to stout persons to be gleaned from his book, also hundreds of letters (reprinted) from persons describing the particulars and various fluctuating weights after taking so much of the compound. These are not the ordinary stereotyped sort of quack testimonial, but really from intelligent persons who certify to the extraordinary results of the medicine, in many cases to invite public attention to the marked effects demonstrated.

A POSITIVE REMEDY FOR CORPULENCE.

Any remedy that can be suggested as a cure or alleviation for stoutness will be heartily welcomed. We have recently received a well-written book, the author of which seems to know what he is talking about. It is entitled "Corpulency and the Cure" (256 pages), and is a cheap issue (only fourpence), published by Mr. F. C. Russell, of Woburn House, 27, Store Street, Bedford Square, London, W.C. Our space will not do justice to this book; send for it yourself. It appears that Mr. Russell has submitted all kinds of proofs to the English Press. The editor of the *Tablet*, the Catholic organ, writes:—"Mr. Russell does not give us the slightest loophole for a doubt as to the value of his cure; for in the most straightforward and matter-of-fact manner he submitted some hundreds of original and unsolicited testimonial letters for our perusal, and offered us plenty more, if required. To assist him to make this remedy known, we think we cannot do better than publish quotations from some of the letters submitted. The first one, a marchioness, writes from Madrid:—'My son, Count ———, has reduced his weight in twenty-two days 16 kilos., *i.e.*, 34lb.' Another writes:—'So far (six weeks from commencement of following your system) I have lost fully two stone in weight.' The next (a lady) writes:—'I am just half the size.' A fourth:—'I find it is successful in my case. I have lost 8lb. in weight since I commenced (two weeks).' Another writes:—'A reduction of 18lb. in a month is a great success.' A lady from Bournemouth writes:—'I feel much better, have less difficulty in breathing, and can walk about.' Again a lady says:—'It reduced me considerably, not only in the body, but all over.' The author is very positive. He says:—'Step on a weighing-machine on Monday morning and again on Tuesday, and I guarantee that you have lost 2lb. in weight without the slightest harm, and vast improvement in health through ridding the system of unhealthy accumulations.'" —*Cork Herald.*

SHOULD STOUT PERSONS STARVE THEMSELVES?

We are afraid that semi-starvation as a cure for corpulency prevails very much to a dangerous degree. Mr. Archer, the late well-known prominent jockey, was in the habit of going without food for a long stretch in order that he could ride a certain horse at its weight, and there is not much doubt that the debility resulting from this habit of abstemiousness was certainly not conducive to combating the dire attack of fever which was perhaps indirectly responsible for the untimely end, in the zenith of his fame, of this unfortunate but accomplished horseman. Even Mary Jane in the kitchen will eat sparingly of the food allowed her, while she will seek to reduce her fat by copious draughts from the vinegar cruet, and succeeds only in injuring the coats of her stomach—the forerunner of dyspeptic trouble which will be difficult to overcome.

The Continental medicos seem to advocate this great reduction of ordinary foods, but one of the savants suggests that the stout person should eat considerably of fatty meats in order that the appetite be appeased, and consequently less food required, so that practically this is indirectly advocating semi-starvation. On the other hand, Mr. Russell, the British specialist, takes a different course. He says, "Eat as much as you like," and as it is an acknowledged fact that under his treatment persons lose from 2lb. to 12lb. per week, it beyond doubt stands out pre-eminent against those so-called starvation cures "made in Germany." Some claim that Mr. Russell has to insist upon his patients drinking hot water every morning, but, on the contrary, he avers that it is dangerous to do so, and of course has never advised it. No, the success of Mr. Russell's treatment is incomparably beyond other specialists, for he resorts to no strict dietary, and simply prescribes a harmless vegetable tonic combination which is the outcome of years of study and botanical research. We advise all those interested in this question to get the book, the price of which is only fourpence. It is entitled "Corpulency and the Cure" (256 pages) and is published by him at Woburn House, 27, Store Street, London, W.C. It can be had direct or through any bookseller.—*The Million.*

EXTRAORDINARY SUCCESS IN THE TREATMENT OF OBESITY.

Our corpulent readers will be glad to learn how to positively lose two stone in about a month with the greatest possible benefit in health, strength, and muscle, by a comparatively new system. It is a singular paradox that the patient, returning quickly to a healthy state, with increased activity of brain, digestive and other organs, naturally requires more food than hitherto, yet, notwithstanding this, he absolutely loses in weight 1lb. or 2lb. daily, as the weighing-machine will prove. Thus there is no suggestion of starvation. It is an undoubted success, and the author, who has devoted years of study to the subject, guarantees a noticeable reduction within twenty-four hours of commencing the treatment. This is different with other diseases, for the patient, in some cases, may go for weeks without being able to test whether the physician has rightly treated him, and may have derived no real or apparent improvement in health. Here, we repeat, the author guarantees it in twenty-four hours, the scale to be the unerring recorder. The treatment aims at the actual root of obesity, so that the superfluous fat does not return when discontinuing the treatment. It is perfectly harmless. We advise our readers to call the attention of stout friends to this, because, sincerely, we think they ought to know. For their information we may say that, on sending cost of postage (fourpence), a reprint containing 256 pages of Press notices from some hundreds of medical and other journals—British and foreign—and other interesting particulars, including the book, containing the "recipe," can be had from Mr. F. C. Russell, Woburn House, 27, Store Street, Bedford Square, London, W.C.—*Belfast News Letter.*

CURE OF OBESITY.

Mr. F. C. Russell, of Woburn House, Store Street, Bedford Square, London, W.C., has long been famous for his remedy for the cure of obesity. Those who suffer from this difficulty will, by sending 4d. to the above address, receive Mr. Russell's book (256 pages), containing testimonials from a great number of persons who have been benefited by the treatment, as well as a recipe for it. It matters not what be the weather or season, those who are troubled suffer equally in hot weather and in cold; in summer they are overburdened by their own weight, in winter bronchial ailments are set up through the least cold, as the air tubes are not free to act, as they would otherwise do without the internal obstruction. Mr. Russell undertakes that persons under his treatment should lose one stone a month in weight, and that their health, strength, and activity should be regenerated.—*Young Ladies' Journal.*

GIVEN AWAY £5,000! **GRAHAM & CO.'S** GIVEN AWAY £5,000!

MONSTER CHRISTMAS GIFTS.

IMPORTANT NOTICE.—Messrs. GRAHAM & COMPANY intend to present their Customers with a Monster Parcel as a means of advertising their celebrated

EGYPTIAN GOLD JEWELLERY

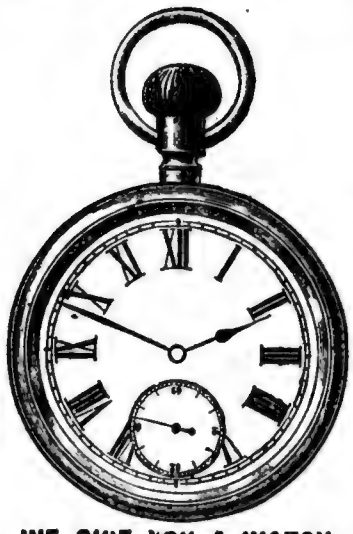
FOR THE SMALL SUM OF 6s. 6d. WE WILL SEND AS FOLLOWS:

	Our Price.	
One Gents' Egyptian Gold Albert, or one Ladies' Egyptian Gold Albert	2s. 6d.	FOR 6s. 6d.
One Seal or Locket for Chain	1s. 6d.	
One Gents' Carbon Diamond Ring, or one Ladies' 5-Stone Diamond Ring	3s. 6d.	
One Gents' Carbon Diamond Scarfpin, or one Ladies' Fashionable Brooch	2s. 6d.	
One Pair of Cuff Links, or one Carbon Diamond Bracelet	2s. 6d.	
TOTAL	12s. 6d.	

In addition to above every Purchaser will be Presented Free of Charge with one of our Handsome

KEYLESS WATCHES,

Usually sold by us at Half-a-Guinea.



WE GIVE YOU A WATCH,
GUARANTEED TO KEEP CORRECT TIME.

READ WHAT IS SAID BY THOSE WHO HAVE PURCHASED.

"Lowick-by-Beale, Northumberland, August 17.

"GENTLEMEN,—Received to-day your second parcel of Jewellery, with which we are immensely pleased. We really wonder how you can do it. The watch itself is worth more than the money charged for the whole. Many thanks for punctuality.

"Very truly yours,

"WILLIAM McISAAC."

Every Watch is Carefully Examined, Timed, and Guaranteed a Correct Timekeeper. Call and see them.

We do this to save the enormous cost of advertising, preferring to give our customers the benefit. As we lose money on each parcel we cannot supply more than two parcels to one person. If you cannot call, get a P.O. at once, and send for this wonderful parcel. Orders will be executed in rotation.

Money returned if not as represented.

NOTE.—The entire parcel will be sent for 6s. 6d. (post free registered 7s.). Each Customer will receive gratis one of our HANDSOMELY ILLUSTRATED CATALOGUES. Be sure and call or send to-day for the

6s. 6d. Monster Presentation Parcel Including the Handsome Keyless Watch.

E. GRAHAM & COMPANY, 227, STRAND, LONDON, W.C.

much of what goes on behind the scenes, and in this short biography it was insinuated that every action of his long and prosperous life had been actuated by the very highest motives. All the bad things were left out, and all the good things emphasised without undue enlargement.

My heart sank as I noticed all this. There was only one hope left. The general effect might be all right, but it was just within the bounds of possibility that he would consider it badly written. I would have gladly given ten years of my life for the pleasure of hearing him say so. I longed to see him rewrite the whole thing on the margin, or better still to tear it up and say he was very sorry, but really he would rather not have the interview published. Ethel's success was not sure yet.

At last he had finished and he turned himself slightly towards me in his chair. His cheeks were actually flushed with pleasure.

"It is capital," he said frankly, "I can't imagine how it was done. I know nothing of such things, but it seems wonderful to me that anyone should have written such an article as this from the few bare facts I gave in answer to a few bare questions."

"It is only a matter of practice," I said bitterly; "I don't see anything wonderful in it."

"I hope it is not an indiscreet question," the old gentleman said, beaming on me in a way which was positively sickening, "but don't you yourself consider this a masterpiece, something a little bit better than usual?"

I laughed out loud in bitter scorn, and almost instinctively he held up his hand and said:

"Hush."

"I have written many a better thing than that," I said, flushing slightly at this unmannerly interruption, and I think he thought it was modesty which brought the blood to my cheeks.

"Of course, of course," he said. "I didn't mean that. But it seems to me to show a power of handling detail, a strength of expression, a mastery of language, and a force of metaphor which are the mainstay of that mysterious attribute which men call genius."

"Genius," I answered mockingly. "How little do you know the writer of that article. How little do you guess how each polished phrase was hammered out with a dictionary on one hand, with synonyms and antonyms upon the other. You cannot judge an article until you know the writer or have an inkling of his methods."

I think the old gentleman was rather surprised at my vehemence.

"Perhaps, some day," he said with a courteous little bow, "I may have the pleasure of numbering the gifted authoress among my friends."

Tears sprang into my eyes. So Ethel was to make rich friends and to receive homage as well as to make money by her writings. Not if I could help it.

"I scarcely think so," I said maliciously. "Between a genius and a starving journalist working in a Chelsea garret, there is a great gulf fixed."

"Starving?" he echoed, wonderingly.

"Yes," I said, "starving."

He looked at me for a minute with a strange yearning, and such great compassion as I saw written on his face was a revelation to me.

He got up and laid his hand on my shoulder. I was trembling with rage.

"Miss Matheson," he said.

I looked up and saw his handsome old face bending over mine, while tears of pity stole down his cheeks. Then he began speaking quickly, he told me that he was childless, that his wife was yearning for the love of some young girl who would be a daughter to her, and a companion during the long hours which called him to his business. Then with a certain courteous air of dignity he asked me if I would care to live with them and share their home.

"I," in unutterable amazement.

"Yes, child," he answered, and I felt the pressure of his hand more firmly on my shoulder. "Have I pained you, by making the suggestion? Your genius is too great to moulder in a garret, your face too beautiful to be marred by the cruel pangs of hunger. You will forgive an old man for speaking like this to you—come child, come, and brighten our lives with your companionship."

"Come, child, come, and brighten our lives."

Then slowly I realised the mistake he had made. He thought that I was the Miss Matheson who had written that hateful article now lying forgotten on his desk.

Oh, the torture of that discovery. For a moment I was stunned. Words of explanation rose to my lips and suddenly died away with a murmur, leaving me cold and trembling. Perhaps I was mistaken after all. Surely he must know who was speaking to him. At all events I had done nothing to deceive him. I had not said one word which might mislead him. Indeed, I had tried to run down my sister's work. Why should I throw this chance away which had been given me. Heaven knows I wanted it more than Ethel. She could keep herself by writing now and I could not.

I raised my tear-stained face to his in gratitude, and then I became unconscious, for the first and last time in my life.

* * * * * *

I slipped a sovereign into the whip's hand as he fastened the brush to my saddle bow, and then I turned my horse out of the soppy meadow into the lane. All day we had been riding through a driving rain, and it must have been past four then. The wind was rising ominously, and between the high banks covered with rotting bracken and leafless hazel trees it was black as night.

I cared nothing for being alone with my horse. Either of us could have found the way blindfolded. Stella broke into a slow jog-trot. I wondered vaguely what had become of the gay cavalier who had started out with me that morning and raced me neck and neck through the hardest run of the season. I had lost sight of him in the field of stubble we crossed before we came to the brook. Perhaps his horse had refused the running water in that uncanny light, perhaps he had come a purler.

Stella felt the snaffle tighten in my hand at the thought, and she swerved off on to the grass and broke into a canter. There is a risk of breaking your neck every time you ride to hounds; but this is a craven thought. And yet if Donald came home on a gate——

A turn in the road brought us in sight of a little public-house. A bright light shone out through the coffee-room window, lighting the old farm yard on the opposite side of the road.

A number of men in pink were standing round the door, two grooms were holding eight horses between them, and half-a-dozen more were enjoying a bran mash in the stables.

Stella whinnied softly as a man passed her with a bucket of water in each hand. I pulled up and let her drink. At this moment a tall gentleman with a fair moustache and a long ulster reaching to his spurs came out of the bar with a cigarette in his hand. It was Donald. He saw me directly he climbed into his dogcart.

"Hullo, Miss Ward!" he sang out. "Let me give you a lift home, won't you? Here, Moss, take this horse, and drop him at the Manor stables as you pass."

"Thanks," I said gratefully, and in another moment I had dismounted, and given Stella to Lord Donald Elliot's groom.

"Thank heaven you're alive," he said fervently, as he threw a fur rug across my shoulders. "It was a mad thing to take a brook like that in the twilight.

I laughed scornfully.

"I don't value my life as highly as you do yours," I remarked.

"Then you ought to," he answered. "If not for your own sake, then for the sake of others," and he sighed in the most ridiculous way because I kept my eyes fixed on the carriage lamp.

"I am not conceited enough to think that I should be missed," I said, with a splendid affectation of modesty. "With you, of course, it is different. You are a man with a mission, or a man with ambition, whichever you like. You think, perhaps you think rightly," with a little laugh and a shrug of my shoulders, "that if you were to die the world would lose a musician who has never before been equalled. Your nature is so unselfish that you refuse to risk your life for a little pleasure, feeling as you do, that were anything to happen to you it would be nothing short of an international calamity. If I were a second edition of Mozart, with all the attraction of a handsome Lifeguardsman, and the prospects of that genius, Paderewski, I, too, should be more careful than I am."

I knew by the way in which he laid the whip across the mare's back that he was angered. There was nothing in the world I enjoyed more than teasing my boy. He was so awfully good.

"As usual, you wilfully misunderstand me," he said rather rudely. "When I said for the sake of others, I did not mean for the sake of those who read your novels, I meant——"

"Really, Lord Elliot, even a comic paper would have labelled that one of those things one would rather have left unsaid. Whatever modesty may prompt *me* to say, it is hardly polite of you to suggest that I should not be missed from the world of literature. I may not be in the first flight of novelists, but——"

"Oh, shut up, Paula," he said savagely, and I heard the groom behind us laugh softly to himself.

"You cannot expect a lover to weigh everything he says like the editor of a comic paper."

Then he turned to me humbly and full of repentance. We were so near the end of our journey that I nestled my hand in his. I never believed in carrying this sort of thing too far, and our lovers' quarrels had never yet outlived a parting.

Ah, these were the happiest days of my life! As the only daughter of Frederick Ward, celebrity and millionaire, publishers had bowed down before me and grovelled at my feet. They had spread their thick cloaks over the mire of failure, and I had walked across to the steps of fame unsoiled.

I was shivering when I got down from the dogcart, and I went straight up to my bedroom. As I passed the boudoir door I looked in and found it was empty, although a cup of tea was standing in the fender for me. I went in to drink it, and as I rose from the hearth, cup in hand, I noticed a book lying open on the table, which made me tremble so violently I had to put the tea down. It was an album in which my father pasted all the articles which I wrote as they appeared in the magazines.

Someone had opened it at the first page, and there was the heading of that article which shadowed my whole life like a cloud.

"FREDERICK WARD.

"MILLIONAIRE AND PHILANTHROPIST."

It was signed with the simple initial "M."

My "father" loved to pore over these columns, on which the ink was already beginning to fade from black to brown, for he said they had brought a child into his desolate home. Ah! what would I not have given to tear them out and let them be forgotten.

For five years I had taken all the credit for that interview, and although I had written columns which were a thousand times more powerful, I never dared confess the truth, for my father still thought every line an epigram, every sentence a masterpiece.

Ethel had never known how I had robbed her, and yet there were times when the dread of discovery made my life miserable, and I began to look forward to the day when Ethel should die as the day which would make me happy. I saw no other release from the danger which threatened me.

It was not for my own sake I cared, but a little for my father's, and most of all for Lord Elliot's. He knew the story of my adoption by heart, and I was conscious that his great love for me would never be stronger than his great love of truth which was the absorbing deity of his heart's devotion. Truth was written in his honest eyes; truth was stamped upon his face; truth was in the very pressure of his hand. There was no crime he could not forgive but a lie. A woman he could not trust he could never love, and my whole life since the day on which I had first met Frederick Ward had been one long half-unconscious lie. A sin of omission rather than commission, the victim of most trying circumstances.

I threw the hated book down on the floor, spurning it with my foot, and then I went out, crying bitterly, to dress for dinner.

* * * * * *

So much I knew, and much more beside on which I do not care to speak. Now for some hearsay which will lead to the story of the bursting of the storm which my ill winds had gathered round me, causing great clouds to rise out of little flakes drifting as it seemed harmlessly across the horizon of my life.

The twilight of a December afternoon in London cast a gloom over the smoking

room of the Péron Club in Piccadilly, and the smell of the best cigars mingled with the faint perfume of Russian leather.

A man lounged back in a comfortable settee wheeled near the fire, his hands thrust into his pockets, and his one leg thrown carelessly across the other. Another was leaning forward in a huge arm-chair, his elbows resting on his knees, his chin upon his hands, and his handsome eyes reflecting the ember glow.

"Aren't you feeling nervous, Elliot?" asked the man in the settee looking with a kind of awe at the impassive profile silhouetted against the greyish twilight.

"Nervous. Not I," answered Lord Elliot, with a little laugh. "True I am standing on the threshold of my career, but I am buoyed up with confidence. Yes, on my honour there is no sinking sensation at my heart which you acting men call stage fright."

"That's because you don't much care whether you please the public or not. If your bread and butter depended on your popularity you would know what it was——"

The springs vibrated as Lord Elliot sat up in his chair and looked at his companion.

"What do you mean?" he said. "Money, of course, is nothing to me, but the reward of twenty years' incessant practice will be the applause of my audience."

The other frowned slightly, and bit his lip in a visible effort to understand. Love of art for art's sake had never occurred to him.

He reached out his hand and pressed an electric button for a whiskey and soda.

"I used to know Paderewski once," he said, apropos of nothing in particular.

"Did you," said Lord Elliot, with a smile. "And what happened?"

"Oh, nothing. Only I was wondering whether you loved music as much as any of the masters."

"My dear fellow," said Lord Elliot, "of course I do. To find myself among the first rank of musicians is the greatest ambition of my life. Nothing else is wanting to make my happiness complete."

"And when does the great concert come off?"

"In three weeks' time."

"And you are to be married?"

"Next week."

"By Jove! you seem in luck's way just now. I know what that girl is to you, for ever since you have been my friend you have quoted her and held her up as a pattern of feminine perfection."

"Yes, she is my ideal. Besides her beauty and her wealth she has the greatest of all virtues."

"And that is?"

"Truth. She is a girl who would never tell a lie."

* * * *

His friend had gone, and Lord Elliot had taken his seat on the huge settee. Two men came in and sat on the other side. They were talking in an undertone, but now and then catches of their conversation reached him. Presently he heard his name mentioned, and almost unconsciously he listened.

"So Elliot's to be married to-morrow week," he heard a man say, and he thought he recognised the voice.

"Yes; to Paula Ward. You know her story, of course. What?"

"About her interview with the old man. Yes. That was a stroke of business, by Jove."

"That girl has always seemed to me the most perfect illustration of the saying that the wicked shall flourish like a green bay tree," observed the second speaker.

"What in the world do you mean?"

"I thought everyone knew. She never wrote that article."

Lord Elliot sprang to his feet.

"What do you mean, you infernal liar?" swinging round and confronting the speaker. There was an odd rattle in his throat, and his eyes were blazing ominously.

The other bit his lip. "I beg your pardon," he said, "I did not know you were there. Perhaps I ought not to have said——"

Lord Elliot knew by his friend's face that he had not been merely gossipping or else the reproach had not passed unheeded.

"Tell me," he said, huskily. And Lord Maison told him all he knew. Ethel Matheson had told him herself that she had written it. He had laughed at the idea at first, and said that her sister claimed it; not only that, but it was on the strength of it that old Frederick Ward had adopted her. Then Ethel had laughed and shaken her head.

"She has written many a better thing than that," she said, and there the conversation dropped.

* * * * * *

I was sitting in the drawing-room reading the proofs of a novel when he came in. I saw at once that something was wrong by his face. Then my eyes fell on that fatal volume in his hand and I knew I turned white as death even to my lips. In that moment of terror I felt that my love for the man meant more to me than anything else in the world, and he was looking so aged and sad that the tears sprang into my eyes. Whatever happened he should never say good-bye.

"Paula," he said.

I got up, and would have thrown my arms round his neck only he drew back stiffly.

He wheeled a chair to a table and half led and half pushed me to it. Then he opened that hateful scrapbook, and I could feel the hand which rested on the back of my chair trembling like a leaf.

"Tell me," he said, clearing his throat with an effort, "did you write this interview with your 'father'?"

"What a ridiculous question, Donald," and I laughed.

"It is not ridiculous," he answered gravely. "Your answer means life or death to me."

I hesitated for one moment. I would have given anything to look at his face, only I had not the courage. Did he know the truth, or was he only guessing? Then I made up my mind—I must play the game to its bitter end.

"Of course I did. Why?"

He sighed deeply, and passed his hand across his forehead.

"Do you mean you disbelieve me," I cried, springing to my feet and standing before him with clenched fists. My vehemence half convinced him, and he stood ashamed with lowered eyes.

"Are you sure you have not confused what might have been with what actually was the case?" he asked eagerly.

"Tell me," he said, "did you write this interview with your 'father'?"

"Of course," I answered fearlessly. "Do you mean you doubt me? Oh, Donald my love, my love."

Then he took me in his arms and I knew that I was safe.

* * * * * *

The door closed behind me, and I was alone. I rose in haste and crossed over to the writing-table. There was only one thing to do. I must send a wire to Ethel to meet me, and must explain everything to her. It seemed strange to me then that I had never thought of this before. It would be easy to face the matter with her, and she, dear sister, would forgive me even before I had asked to be forgiven.

Envy, hatred, or malice never entered her gentle heart. And after that the past would be no more. She had only to say that I wrote the article, and the cloud which had threatened to ruin my life would be dispersed, the brightness of a clear conscience would be mine at last. I wrote the wire and gave it to a man-servant.

Then, with a sigh of relief, I went upstairs to dress for a drive with Lord Elliot. How strange it seemed to think that a lie, which I had acted quite unconsciously at first, and only uttered to save unwieldy explanations, should have nearly cost me my honour, and, above all, my love.

That drive was one of the happiest in my life. Donald was full of his prospects and the great concert which meant so much to him. And I shared in the thoughts of his triumph. Yes, it would be very dear to me to see him bowed down to and worshipped as a master. For I, too, loved music, but chiefly for his sake.

When we reached home we found a telegram from Ethel, and I started off to meet her. Donald wanted to come too, but I reminded him of an important letter, and he stayed. It was just as well that I should see her alone, and get it over at once.

As I was waiting at the station Donald turned up. He had come across the fields to post his letter, and he feared the horse might be restless with the cold. There was nothing for it but to let them meet.

In another moment the train was in the station, and I was leaning over and covering the girl with kisses. I was glad to see her again. Oh, so glad, for once we had loved one another dearly.

Donald let down the back seat, and Ethel insisted on occupying it. The cart was not well balanced for three, and Donald suggested that he had better get up first, and that I should follow afterwards.

It was just at this moment that the climax came.

Ethel was standing at the station door seeing to her luggage, and Donald had one foot on the step of the cart. She turned to me and opened her bag.

"What do you think I have got here, Paula?" she said.

"What?" I asked, bending forward with careless curiosity.

"A copy of that interview I wrote years ago with Mr. Ward. I happened to come across it last——"

I saw Donald turn his head, and I saw the blood rush from his face.

I was seized with a terrible anger. I think for the moment I was mad.

With a suppressed scream of rage I raised my whip, and hit her across the face with the lash. Donald saw the gesture, and half sprang at my arm. Ah, how shall I tell the rest!

The horse started forward in the shafts, and Donald, missing his footing, fell with great force to the ground. I heard a dull cry of agony, and I turned my head and saw him lying there, and Ethel, a red scar across her face, bending over him.

"Are you hurt, Donald?" I called out.

He got up slowly.

"No, I don't think so," he said. "It's only my wrists."

At that moment Dr. Milford came out of the station, and he put Donald in his carriage at once without a word to me.

Donald put his head out of the window and called out cheerily,

"It's all right, little one. I shall be back to tea."

Then he sank back in the brougham with a groan.

The expression of agony on those white cheeks I shall never forget, nor the reproach in his eyes. He was not thinking of his own suffering, he was thinking of the lie I had told and the love which had died within him smothered in contempt. Ah, what it must have cost him to say good-bye to his illusion!

They kept it from me for a time, but at last I knew the truth, Lord Elliot would never play the piano again. He had broken both his wrists. Cut off on the threshold of success by one to whom his ambition was only less sacred than to himself. So much for the lie, which I had never meant to utter!

PEARSON'S WEEKLY.

One Penny every Saturday.

MORE READING MATTER THAN ANY OTHER PAPER OF THIS NATURE.

SERIAL STORY BY RIDER HAGGARD.

£1,000 INSURANCE AGAINST FATAL RAILWAY ACCIDENTS.

£100 INSURANCE AGAINST DEATH ON THE FOOTBALL FIELD.

£20 INSURANCE AGAINST BURGLARY AND HOUSEBREAKING.

HOME NOTES.

One Penny every Thursday.

THIRTY-TWO PAGES.

PAPER PATTERNS GIVEN AWAY.

FAR AND AWAY THE LARGEST CIRCULATION OF ANY LADIES' PAPER.

PROFUSELY ILLUSTRATED.

ALL THE LATEST FASHIONS.

NO LADY SHOULD BE WITHOUT IT.

THE GREATEST SUCCESS OF THE TIME.

JOHN NOBLE L^TD.,

THE WAREHOUSE,

11, PICCADILLY, MANCHESTER.

KNOCKABOUT FROCKS FOR GIRLS

Supplied in the **John Noble Cheviot Serge,** with saddle top, long full sleeves, belt and pocket

FROM 1/6 EACH

Note the following low prices,

Lengths	21	24	27	30	33 ins.
Prices	1/6	2/-	2/6	3/-	3/6 ea.

Lengths	36	39	42	45 ins.
Prices	4/-	4/6	5/-	5/6 ea.

EVERY PURCHASER DELIGHTED.

The lengths stated are from top of neck band to bottom of skirt in front.

PRESENTS that are useful are always more acceptable than articles made only to look at, and what can be more acceptable as a Seasonable Gift, to a Lady or Child, than one of the **John Noble Cheviot Serge Costumes.**

NOBLE'S NOVELTIES

In Dress Fabrics for Seasonable Wear, including hundreds of Novel and Artistic Designs and Colourings, are unanimously recommended by the leading journals of Fashion. Ladies Everywhere are invited to write at once for

John Noble's Large Box

containing over

1,000 New Patterns

sent post free on approval to any address. A post card sent to The Warehouse will ensure their immediate despatch. The value and variety will delight all.

PATTERNS POST FREE.

THE JOHN NOBLE HALF GUINEA COSTUMES

NEW REGISTERED DESIGN FOR WINTER 1894

DIRECT FROM THE LARGEST FIRM OF COSTUME MANUFACTURERS IN THE WORLD, AT LESS THAN HALF ORDINARY PRICES.

These Costumes are made in **The John Noble Cheviot Serge,** in Black, Navy, Brown, Myrtle, Ruby, Reseda, Tan, Grey or Drab. They are supplied complete for the ridiculous price of **10/6** each, packed in leather board box, and sent carriage paid for 9d. extra.

The John Noble Half-Guinea Costumes are known all over the world as the most remarkable value ever produced, and have created a complete revolution in the cost of garments for Ladies' wear.

DON'T MAKE ANY MISTAKE,

JOHN NOBLE'S price (10s. 6d.) is not for the mere dress length but for the complete costume made up and ready for immediate

OVER 800 WORKERS EMPLOYED IN THEIR MANUFACTURE. THE MOST REMARKABLE VALUE PRODUCED.

☞ JOHN NOBLE, Ltd., the pioneers of the revolution in Dress-making, caused by the introduction of the famous Half-Guinea Costumes, mean to keep them always in the van, and up to date by following the dictates of fashion, and as the present mode requires much greater fulness in sleeves and skirt they have designed a new and beautiful costume in accordance with this latest style; but particular attention is called to the fact that the price (**10s. 6d.**) remains the same, although the cost of production has been greatly increased by use of extra material.

Each garment consists of improved wide skirt and new smartly shaped Bodice, which is pleated at the back into a pointed saddle that terminates in two points at the front; full fashionable sleeves, bound seams, and belt, and the bodice can be worn inside or outside the skirt, which measures 40 inches long. The lower part of the skirt, and the cuffs, collar, and saddle of bodice, are trimmed with one row of fine silk cord, the whole thus forming a Lady's complete costume that has secured beyond a doubt

THE ADMIRATION OF THE WORLD

THE PRESENT DESIGN EXCELS ALL PREVIOUS ONES in every respect. The style is better, the cut is superior, and the make and finish beyond all criticism, thus adding in a triple degree to the already marvellous value of these Costumes, which have secured **An Enormous Success,** and are known in every part of the civilised world. Each Costume packed in box and sent carriage paid for 9d. extra. The sizes kept in stock will fit any figure up to 38 inches round the bust under arms, but larger or special sizes can be made to order at a cost of 1s. 6d. extra.

☞ **DO NOT HESITATE** to give these Costumes a trial. Post your order to John Noble, Ltd., and you will be delighted with the value received.

10/6

THE TRUTH OF AN ADVERTISEMENT is not proven by the quantity of orders resulting from its appearance, but by the number of second orders that eventually come to hand from the same persons, and it is an incontestible proof of the genuineness of John Noble's advertisements, that the number of repeat orders received daily for these Costumes is fully equalled to that of first orders. Moreover, **LADIES ARE INFORMED** these are not slop-made or "skimpy" looking garments that will break out at the seams and fall to pieces after a few weeks' wear, but full-sized, stylish and thoroughly durable costumes, equally suitable for Morning or General Wear, Gardening, Walking, Climbing, Boating, Tennis, Golf, Travelling, or in fact, they are equally well adapted for

ANY WEAR OR ANY WEARER ANYWHERE.

THE JOHN NOBLE CHEVIOT SERGE (Regd.) Is a fabric of world-wide fame and durability. It is 52in., wide, does not spot with rain and may be washed whenever necessary. This fabric has never been equalled at the price, and so far as wear and general appearance go, might reasonably be said to be worth anywhere between 2s. 6d. and 3s. 6d. the yard. Colors: Navy, Black, Brown, Myrtle, Reseda, Ruby Grey, Drab, Tan or Sent carriage paid for 9d. extra. Every reader can secure a **Full Dress Length** of **SIX YARDS FOR**

7/6

Patterns also illustrated "Book of the Serge" and Fashion Sheet of other Costumes for Ladies and Children's wear sent Post Free to any reader of PEARSON'S WEEKLY XMAS No. on application to

JOHN NOBLE, Ltd.
XI, Piccadilly,
MANCHESTER.

FROM 5/6

LADIES COSTUME SKIRTS

In the Fashionable Wide Shape are supplied in the John Noble Cheviot Serge as follows: Costume Skirts untrimmed

PRICE 5/6 ONLY

Costumes Skirts trimmed one row fancy braid edged gold silk Russia Cord, price only 6s. 11d.; Costume Skirts trimmed broad cross-band velvet, edged gold silk cord, price only 7s. 11d.

Costume Skirts trimmed two rows handsome Chenille braid, price only 8s. 11d. Each skirt packed in box and sent carriage paid for 9d. extra. Colours-Black, Navy, Brown, Myrtle, Ruby, Reseda, Grey, Tan or Drab.

A WARNING!

Readers are specially cautioned against buying any Costumes represented as the manufacture of John Noble, Ltd., from travellers, agents or shops, many very inferior imitations of these world-famed Costumes are just now on the market, produced in inferior materials in order to sell them at the same price, but as John Noble, Ltd., have no agents no travellers, no branches, no shops, intending purchasers are cautioned that the genuine goods can only be obtained direct from the Originators and Sole Manufacturers (John Noble, Ltd.), and all letters should be addressed

JOHN NOBLE Ltd.,
THE WAREHOUSE,
11, PICCADILLY, MANCHESTER.

PRICE 8/9 COMPLETE

YOUNG MISSES COSTUMES

In a new design that has taken the public fancy. They are just the thing for regular wear being made in the John Noble Cheviot Serge, and consisting of stylish blouse bodice and extra wide Skirt. The Bodice is made with prettily gathered front, full fashionable sleeves, shaped belt and fastens up the back. The Skirt is made in two sizes, viz., 33 and 36 inches long, and is trimmed four rows of narrow black Russia Braid; the cuffs collar and belt of bodice being trimmed similarly. Colours Black, Navy, Brown, Myrtle, Ruby, Reseda, or Tan, also in fashionable mixtures of drab or grey. Price for the complete Costume only 8s. 9d. Packed in box and sent carriage paid for 9d. extra. When ordering please state whether skirt is required 33 or 36in. long

8/9

THE ROMANCE OF RAJAH MOUNTAIN

By GEORGE GRIFFITH.

Author of "The Angel of the Revolution," and "The Syren of the Skies," &c., &c.

THE sun had just risen above the summit of the Great Rajah Mountain, which a glance at the map will show you is situated in the Province of Perak a few miles north of the 4th parallel of latitude, and was shining over a stretch of wild country embracing the scenery and vegetation of three zones, from the tropical jungle of the western lowlands to the chilly sparseness of the mountain top.

About midway between these extremes, just where the jungle was thinning out into the forest land of the subtropical zone, a bronzed, stalwart, and travel-stained man was standing leaning on the muzzle of a serviceable-looking Martini sporting rifle, watching the development of a tragedy that was being enacted about fifty yards from the spot where he stood.

The man was an Englishman who had yet to see his thirtieth birthday, but looked a good five years older than his age, for he was one of those restless adventurous spirits so often met with in the Far East who live their lives quickly and hardly, compressing the events of a year of ordinary existence into a few weeks, constantly on the move, and exposed to ever-varying climates from sultry heats of the jungle to the eternal frost of mountain regions above the snow-line.

In repose his strong, bronzed face with its firm clear-cut features, dark close-clipped beard, and somewhat heavy moustache would have been considered, especially by women, handsome beyond the average of masculine comeliness. But just now a woman would have looked upon it with fear, and a man with dislike and distrust; there was a savage glint in his clear, steady, grey eyes, and the somewhat thin lips under the moustache were parted in a cruel smile which showed the white strong teeth clenched hard together.

It was such a face as one could imagine looking down into the Roman arena two thousand years ago, the face of a man whose fiercest passions had been aroused by a spectacle before him. And in very fact the spectacle which Ralf Tarrant was looking at as he stood there leaning on his rifle was just such a one as might many a time have been seen in the walls of the Colosseum.

Through a narrow opening in a thick wall of undergrowth he was looking down into a little grassy glade, which for the time being was the arena of a struggle whose savage ferocity had roused in his own breast the fierce blood-lust that was burning in his eye and flushing red through the bronze on his cheeks. Two magnificent tigers, giants of their species, and veritable monarchs of the jungle, were there locked in the death-struggle from which only one would emerge, and which even the victor might not survive to enjoy the prize of his conquest.

A few feet from the spot where the two long, lithe, sinewy bodies were writhing and straining together, now rolling over and over each other, and now reared on their hind legs like two wrestlers, their claws driven deep into each other's flesh, their heads moving rapidly from side to side, watching with blazing eyes the chance to get the death grip on the throat that would end the battle, lay the cause and the prize of the combat—a splendid tigress, well worthy to be the mate of the champion who should do victorious battle for her.

She was lying on her haunches lazily blinking at the two giants who for her sake were locked in the death-struggle. Every now and then her tail would swish gently to and fro, and, as if tired of waiting for the result of the battle, she would lick her big soft paws and rub her cheeks with them like a huge cat at her toilet. Whether she had any personal interest in the issue of the fight or any preference for either of the combatants could not be judged from her demeanour. Whatever her feelings may have been, if she had any, she certainly knew how to mask them with an appearance of impartiality that amounted to absolute indifference.

So intense was the interest with which Tarrant was watching the struggle that he did not hear a footstep behind him, and scarcely even felt a hand which was laid upon his shoulder. The new-comer was a somewhat older man, dressed very similarly to himself in a drab holland shooting suit, long boots, and grey sun-helmet, and carrying, like him, a rifle, a cartridge-belt, and a revolver slung on his left hip.

Violet Maynard.

He was a rather bigger man than Tarrant, bronzed and bearded like him, and, like him too, a fine specimen of Anglo-Saxon manhood. But there all resemblance ended, for Tom Maynard, journalist, explorer, and treasure-seeker—a professional description, by the way, which would apply equally for the time being to the other—differed entirely in colouring and type of feature from his friend and fellow-adventurer. His hair and beard were fair, almost flaxen, and his eyes a clear, honest blue, which well matched the frank, open honesty of his face.

Maynard was too good a hunter to hail Tarrant as he approached. He saw from his attitude that something of more than ordinary interest was keeping him rooted to the spot and holding his gaze, so he came up quietly and put his hand upon his shoulder without a word, at the same time making a gesture of caution with his other hand to someone behind him.

Tarrant neither spoke nor moved beyond an almost imperceptible nod in the direction of the glade. Maynard grasped the situation at a glance, and turning slowly half round laid a finger on his lips and beckoned gently to a third spectator who had just come upon the scene. This was a woman, and the last kind of woman that could have been expected to be watching a tiger fight on the border of a Malay jungle, in one of the wildest parts of the peninsula.

There was nothing whatever of the Amazon about her save perhaps the strong serviceable grey serge dress, sensibly short in the skirts, the long brown boots which met them, and the white peaked cap that was pinned on to the thick plaits of golden-brown hair that were coiled about as shapely a head as ever was put to a woman's shoulders.

A grey-blue veil reaching from the peak of the cap to her chin protected, without concealing, such a face as men have made fools or savages of themselves for the sake of ever since the world began. It was not exactly beautiful according to the strict canons of beauty, but it was perhaps all the more dangerously charming on that account.

It was one of those faces men always look upon with admiration, and generally with a much warmer feeling, and which a woman would not care to see beside that of a man in whom she has any possible or actual proprietary interest. Her clear, almost colourless, skin was in exquisite contrast with the red of her sensuous and yet delicately curved lips, and she had those big sleepy blue-grey eyes which turn violet under the influence of any strong emotion, and which in ordinary circumstances are always about a fourth hidden by the slightly drooping lids and long lashes.

Violet Maynard obeyed her husband's silent warning, and walked up to where the two men were standing with a step so light and a motion so easy that there was something almost serpentine in it. When she reached the two men she slipped her hand into her husband's arm, and peered cautiously around his shoulder down into the glade where the battle royal was still raging with unabated fury.

For a moment a shudder ran through her body, and she clasped her husband's arm almost convulsively. The pallor of her skin increased and her lips tightened. Then the fascination of the scene took hold of her as it had taken hold of the two men, her eyelids lifted, the momentary look of fear faded out of her eyes, then a faint colour came to her cheeks, her nostrils expanded slightly, and her breath came and went faster.

Suddenly her gaze shifted from the struggling animals, and she found herself looking full in Tarrant's eyes. She saw for a moment the fierce light burning in them, the cruel smile on his lips, and the glint of his white teeth under his dark moustache, and she shuddered again, dropped her eyelids for a moment, and when she raised them she was looking at the tigers, and somehow likening them to human beings. As she watched with fascinated eyes, the battle between these two splendid animals took a terribly human interest for her, and a something that had been haunting her, first in vague and then ever more and more distinct form, suddenly took definite shape and seemed to stand like a threatening spectre between her and the battle-ground.

Four months ago her husband and Tarrant, who a couple of years before, had been thrown together in the pursuit of their similar callings and formed an acquaintance which quickly ripened into friendship, had started from Calcutta on an expedition to the Great Rajah Mountain, ostensibly in pursuit of big game and such copy as their adventures might furnish them with the means of turning out.

The real and ultimate object of the expedition was, however, very different. It was, in fact, nothing less than the search for a treasure, reputed to be worth some two millions sterling, which had been spirited out of India in the days of the Mutiny by one of the rebellious Rajahs, who had fled to Malaysia with his favourite wife and a large number of his followers, and had established himself on the mountain to which he had given his name.

Here he had lived for several years in semi-barbaric splendour, supported partly by trading, but chiefly by plunder by sea and land, until a British expeditionary force at last hunted him out of his stronghold and shot him down with the remnant of his followers in the last desperate stand that they preferred to surrender and execution as pirates and dacoits. One of his followers managed to escape the slaughter, and he had bequeathed to his son the secret of the whereabouts of the treasure whose disappearance had mystified the British authorities so much.

This man, Rhara Kulu by name, had gone into the Indian army, and Maynard had first made his acquaintance and then saved his life in a skirmish in a border war, which he was seeing through as a fighting correspondent. Rhara Kulu was a high-caste Hindoo boasting a noble descent, despite the poverty that had sent him into the ranks, and Maynard had become so much attached to him that after saving his life he had procured his discharge and taken him nominally as his servant, but in reality rather as a companion and tutor in Hindustani.

In return for this Rhara had at length confided to him the secret of the Rajah's treasure, and the present expedition had been the result of that confidence. Maynard and Tarrant had clubbed their resources together to pay the expenses of the expedition, and had come out to Perak with Rhara Kulu as guide and partner in the venture.

At this time Maynard had been married a little over a year, and as Violet had absolutely refused to be left behind, she too had been made a member of the expedition, and so far had travelled through the jungle and over hill and dale, partly on foot and partly in a palanquin, borne on the shoulders of brawny thick-legged coolies.

Maynard, in the open unsuspecting honesty of his nature, had entirely failed to see what nineteen out of twenty men in his position would have seen in the combination of circumstances resulting from such a journey made by such people. Of Tarrant's real nature he had not even the faintest suspicion, for Tarrant was one of those men with two distinct characters—one which alone was presented to the world, and the other, perhaps only dimly known to himself, lurking in the deeper recesses of his being, invisible yet ever present and ready to spring forward and supplant the other the moment that a sufficiently strong stimulus to do evil presented itself.

Violet, with the keener intuition of her sex, had begun to half suspect the existence of this inner nature, but only after they had left civilisation far behind them, and it was too late to break off a companionship necessarily intimate which she saw with a vague dread might not impossibly end in disaster. She had been long enough in the East to know that passions are fiercer, and love and hate both stronger and less restrained under the ardent suns of the Tropics than in the chilly atmosphere of the Temperate zones.

But until now she had soothed her half-awakened fears by thinking of her husband's protecting arm, and the friendship which she believed to be so strong between him and the man whom she instinctively felt could and would have wooed and won her had she met him before she married her husband. But in that one brief glance which they had exchanged a moment before, she had seen Tarrant's other nature unmasked for the instant in all its strength and untamed savagery.

In that instant he had told her as plainly as he could have done by word of mouth the meaning that the scene before them had for him. She knew that in his soul he was likening her husband and himself to the two tigers that were rending each other in the glade, and herself to the beautiful creature that was lying lazily awaiting the issue of the conflict that was being waged for the possession of her.

Then, too, she understood in their true meaning a thousand words and looks and gestures which had inspired her with vague fears and a haunting disquiet which had never taken comprehensible shape until now. But now they were so distinct in the terrible menace that they conveyed, and they invested the scene before her with such a fearful personal interest, that after the first shock of purely physical fear had passed she stood silent and motionless, and watched the duel out to the end under the spell of a deadly fascination, which for the time being made fear impossible.

So the three stood and watched the tragedy out to the moment when one of the tigers, with a lucky stroke of its mighty paw, tore fur and flesh away from the face of the other, scraping the bone bare from forehead to muzzle and blinding it completely. Another stroke from the victor flung his adversary sideways to the ground and the next moment the great yellow fangs were buried in its throat and the mighty jaws closed upon its windpipe.

For a second or two the conquered giant writhed and twisted convulsively in its death agony, and then the victor, with a final shake of his great head, loosed his hold and, licking his dripping jaws, turned and limped painfully and yet proudly away to where his prize and now his consort was lying.

"A right battle royal that!" said Maynard, just above his breath, as all three drew a simultaneous sigh of relief, at the end of the excitement and suspense. "No knight of old ever fought more gallantly than that for his lady-love. Why, what the deuce did you do that for, Tarrant?"

While he was speaking Tarrant's rifle had come up to his shoulder, there was a sharp crack and a flash, and the beautiful animal for whose possession the battle had been waged sprang into the air and came down with a dull heavy thump on her side with a two ounce bullet clean through her heart, within a yard of the victorious champion who had fought so hard and shed his blood so freely for her.

"I couldn't help it," said Tarrant, as he pulled the lever of his rifle, jerked the empty cartridge out, and snapped another one in. "The hunter instinct was too strong, I suppose. I couldn't let a skin like that escape me when it was walking quietly off only fifty yards away."

"The slaughter instinct, I should be rather inclined to say," retorted Maynard almost angrily. "There are plenty more tigers in the jungle, and I really think you might have let that fellow have his lady-love after he had fought as he did for her."

"Look after *your* lady-love, man!" laughed Tarrant with a rapid glance at Violet, who instantly shrank back with a half-stifled scream behind her husband. "That fellow has just found out that we are here, and he seems to have some fight in him yet."

The victor in the now fruitless strife had stopped short as his dearly-won consort fell dead beside him. He smelt her all over until the blood welling from the wound caught his eye. He snuffed anxiously at it, licked the wound almost tenderly for a moment, and then, with an angry snarl, turned round with the light of battle rekindled in his eyes, seeking the unseen foe that had struck her down.

She looked up into his face.

Until now the stress of the combat and the smell of his rival's blood had prevented him from winding the spectators of the duel. But now the air was tainted with the powder smoke, and there could be no doubt that enemies were near. There was no sign of weakness or lameness as he stalked across the glade snuffing at the tainted air, but before he had passed the middle of it Tarrant's rifle spoke again, and a bullet crashed into the shoulder, shattering the joint and crippling him at a blow.

He halted on three legs, the broken limb hanging down useless and bleeding, but still snarling open-mouthed defiance at his new foes. For a moment he stood there, making a splendid picture of defiant fury and courage, then a bullet from Maynard's rifle passed squarely between his open jaws, shattered his spine, and he sank lifeless to the ground within a yard or two of his vanquished rival.

"He deserved a better fate, poor fellow!" said Maynard, almost sadly. "I wish you'd let them alone, Tarrant."

"Well, perhaps I was wrong; but I'm afraid there is no one to apologise to, unless I do so to you, on behalf of his deceased majesty of the jungle. And yet, to tell you the truth, I could no more have resisted the impulse to fire at that brute who sat there and watched those two splendid fellows killing each other for her sake than I could have helped shooting her in defence of my own life—and then tigers are vermin, anyhow, and her skin will make a splendid rug for the feet of my own lady-love."

"I didn't know you had a lady-love, Mr. Tarrant," said Violet, speaking with a perceptible tremour in her voice, which her husband naturally attributed to agitation caused by the scene she had just witnessed. As she spoke she lifted her eyelids, and a second glance passed between her and Ralf fraught with such meaning that, obeying the impulse of the moment, he said, with a laugh that was not altogether pleasant to hear:

"Nor have I—at present; but then you know lady-loves may be future as well as present, potential as well as actual. Who knows but some day I may do battle for my sweetheart as that brave fellow down yonder did?"

"Bosh, my dear fellow, bosh!" laughed Maynard, as he threw his rifle over his shoulder and began to push his way through the opening which led to the glade. "You forget that you live five hundred years too late for that. We don't fight for our wives now. We only scheme and slave for the money which they graciously allow us to expend upon them. Come along and get your skin before the sun gets too hot or the smell of the blood brings half a dozen more of the brutes around. Come along, Violet, you can easily get through here after me; we mustn't leave you alone."

Tarrant made no reply to his friend's speech, but stepped into the opening and held the bushes aside for Violet to pass. As she went by him her foot caught in a creeper on the ground and she stumbled forward. Like a flash Tarrant's left arm sprang out, and the next instant she felt herself lifted from the ground and off her feet.

For just one moment longer than was necessary he held her pressed closely to his side. She looked up into his face, her cheeks deadly white and her eyes wide open in mingled surprise and terror. His lips were only a few inches from hers. He half inclined his head as their eyes met, then, with the suddenly rekindled light of passion in his eyes, and a strange smile of mingled pity and amusement on his lips, he suddenly released her, and with a bow that was almost formal in its politeness said, in the quiet even tones of his ordinary conversation:

"You nearly had a nasty fall then, Mrs. Maynard. I am glad that I had the happiness to be near enough to prevent it."

Quiet as was the tone and commonplace as were the words, the double meaning in them flashed instantly upon her, the blood rushed to her face and an angry retort was just rising to her lips when her husband stopped and looked round, saying:

"What's the matter there? Are you two quarrelling?"

"No. I tripped on a creeper, and Mr. Tarrant picked me up again. That's all," replied his wife, in a tone so unconcerned that it surprised herself. Then she followed him into the glade with Tarrant bringing up the rear, walking slowly and with the light of triumph in his eyes, and potential murder in his heart.

A week later the treasure-seekers had crossed over the southern shoulder of the mountain and worked their way round to its eastern slope. On the evening of the seventh day after they had witnessed the battle between the two tigers, Tarrant and Maynard were standing facing each other on an open space not unlike that in which the two jungle monarchs had fought out their duel, save that it was larger.

They stood thirty paces apart, Maynard to the north and Tarrant to the south; each held his rifle at the ready, and the eyes of each were fixed on the red orb of the sun rapidly nearing a level mountain ridge to the west. One rifle shot each as the sun's rim touched the ridge, and then, if that did not suffice, they were to draw their revolvers and finish the work with them, each advancing a pace as each shot was exchanged.

Such was the net result of that fatal moment during which Tarrant had held his friend's wife in his arms and looked unholy love into her eyes. It was the old, old story, older than the days when David walked upon his palace roof and beheld the beauty of the wife of Uriah. It was the duel of the tigers translated into human terms, just the same tragedy, prompted by impulses which differed only from those of the brutes save in so far as they were infinitely more complicated without being a whit the less merciless.

In those seven days the situation had become impossible, and there was no way out of it but this. Tarrant had deliberately planned it, and staked his own life and the honour of his friend on the issue of the desperate game that he was playing. Maynard, whom he had not even taken the trouble to deceive, had recognised, when all too late, the fatal and irreparable mistake that he had made when he had trusted to the honour of the man that he had called his friend and the faith of the woman who had been his wife.

He had faced the situation as any man worthy the name would have done. There had been no scene, no revilings or outbursts of passion. He had simply satisfied himself that his friend had deliberately betrayed his confidence, and then, curtly ordering his wife to go into her tent and stop there, had picked up his rifle and told Tarrant to follow him.

A mile from the camp, which had been pitched two days before close by the rocky gorge in which the Rajah's treasure lay hidden, they had entered the open space in which, like men discussing an expedition against a common enemy, they had made their arrangements, and now they stood finger on trigger waiting for the setting of the sun that one at least would never see rise again.

The rapidly sinking disc had almost touched the mountain ridge, and the two rifles were just coming up simultaneously, when the cry of a woman's voice sounded shrill from the edge of the open space, and Violet ran forward as though she would throw herself into the line of fire between the two men.

As the rifles came up she stopped as though suddenly paralysed by terror. The setting sun shone full upon her blanched face and made her wide-opened staring eyes glitter with a light that looked as though two red coals were burning within them. For the instant the two men forgot the purpose that had put them there facing each other, and both looked for a moment upon the face of the woman for whose sake one, or perhaps both of them, would soon be lying dead upon the grass.

She looked first at one and then at the other, stricken dumb with horror and deadly fear, yet struggling hard to speak. At last a single word forced itself involuntarily and almost in a scream from her lips:

"Ralf!"

As Maynard heard it the almost superhuman restraint that he had imposed upon himself gave way before the fierce rush of his pent-up passion. With a cry almost like that of a wounded animal upon his lips, he suddenly swung his rifle round and levelled it at her heart.

A second later and the bullet would have found its mark, for the light was good and the distance was less than fifty paces, but at the same instant Tarrant's eye glanced along the barrel of his rifle, his finger pressed the trigger, and when the smoke drifted away from the muzzle Maynard was lying motionless on the turf with a bullet through his brain.

Tarrant walked slowly and steadily to the spot where the dead man lay. He stooped and looked for a moment at the bright red spot on the right temple, then he straightened himself up again, threw his rifle over his shoulder, and went with long, quick strides to where Violet was standing, white and silent, staring blankly at the ruddy glow of the sky behind the mountain ridge. He halted in front of her and held out his hand, saying in a tone half of reproach and half of command:

"You're mine now, for I have sold my soul to buy you. Come!"

And without a word she put her hand in his and followed him like one in a dream, thinking, curiously enough, not of the man who was lying murdered a few paces from her, but of the tigress she had seen a week before waiting for her victorious lord in the clearing.

* * * * * *

Tom Maynard's bones had been whitening for more than two years on the Eastern slope of the Great Rajah Mountain when Lady Apthorpe gave one of the earliest and smartest receptions of the London season. A little less than an hour after that

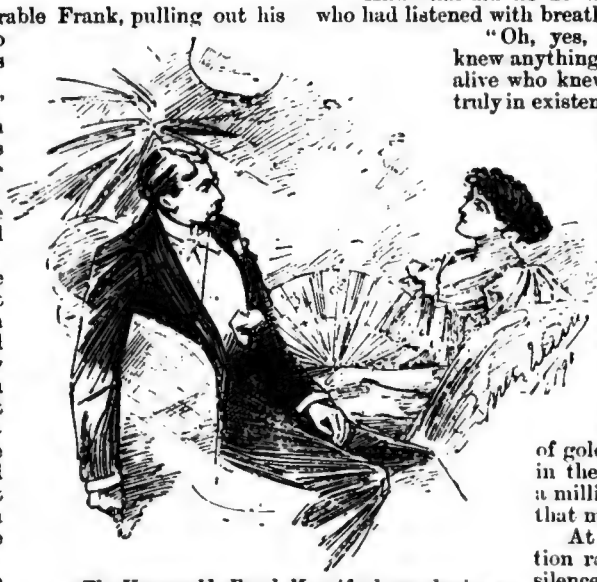
stated on the invitation cards the Honourable Frank Mountford, nephew and heir prospective of Sir Basil Mountford, the richest bachelor baronet in the kingdom, was sharing a comfortably secluded sociable with Beatrice Fane, a bright, pretty brunette who, in the ordinary course of social destiny, had reasonable expectations of some day being Lady Mountford.

"It's about time they were here," said the Honourable Frank, pulling out his watch for the third time. "Tarrant is hardly the man to be deliberately late for the sake of effect, but perhaps he's doing it for his wife's sake."

"That's just what I thought you were going to say," laughed his companion; "just as though men, and even celebrated explorers and social lions, were not just as vain as any woman! Come, you have not told me the story of the new lion and lioness yet as you promised to do, so you may as well beguile the time until they come by telling me, and then I shall be able to fall down and worship with all the more interest."

"All right, but remember you have promised absolute secrecy. No passing it on in confidence, mind, for that would simply run it through half the drawing-rooms in London. I believe, saving Tarrant and his wife, I and Sir Basil are the only two people in England who know the rights of the story, and we shouldn't have known them if it hadn't been for the governor giving Tarrant his first start by getting him that travelling correspondenceship on the *D. T.* The newspaper men have tried all they know to interview him without success, and consequently all sorts of lies have been printed about him. He has kept his own counsel splendidly, and when that book of his comes out there won't be a novel of the season to compare with it."

"And now, having judiciously raised my curiosity to fever pitch, you may take up your parable, and unfold your tale."



The Honourable Frank Mountford was sharing a comfortably secluded sociable with Beatrice Fane.

"Well, I shall just give you the heads of it, because there is no time for a long yarn, and besides, I don't want to spoil the book for you.

"You know, of course, because I have told you myself two or three times, how it was that Tarrant fell in with poor Maynard, whose widow is now Mrs. Tarrant, so I needn't go over that again. This last expedition of his came about in this way:

"Maynard got wind of a big buried treasure which some Eastern potentate had hidden away in a deep gorge near the summit of a big mountain in the Malay peninsula. The fellow who gave him the information was an East Indian, whose father had been a servant of the old Rajah's, and who seems to have been the only man who knew where the treasure was.

"Well, this Rhara Kulu convinced Maynard that the treasure was really to be found, and as he was too poor to do anything of the sort himself he got Maynard to get up an expedition to the interior of the peninsula on the condition that Maynard was to pay all expenses, and take three-fourths of the treasure. Maynard, it seems, much against Kulu's will, took Tarrant into his confidence, and made him a partner in the venture on equal terms with himself, so the end of it was that they started, and Mrs. Maynard, as she was then, went with them.

She put her hand in his, and followed him.

"They went on to Selangor with their outfit, hired a lot of Malay coolies to carry their traps and Mrs. Maynard's palanquin, and struck inland for the mountains. Everything seems to have gone all right until the old Rajah's treasure was actually located, and then Rhara Kulu showed himself in his true colours, and Tarrant by a happy accident discovered that the rascal had never meant to let them share the plunder at all if he could help it.

"He and two or three other Indians that had gone out as coolies and servants, betrayed the true object of the expedition to the Malays, and formed a conspiracy to murder Tarrant and Maynard, share up the plunder and scatter. I may also say that not the least part of the wily Hindoo's plan was to carry Mrs. Maynard off with him—I think I have told you that she is the most charming woman except your adorable self that I have ever seen—and enjoy his share of the treasure with her."

"What a fate!" interjected Beatrice, with a sympathetic shudder.

"Yes," continued Mountford. "A fate several degrees worse than sudden death, but it would have been hers if it hadn't been for Tarrant's pluck and good management. Maynard, it appears, was one of those good-natured, easy-going fellows who wouldn't believe evil about anyone, even a nigger, without proof positive in front of his eyes, and he absolutely refused to act on Tarrant's advice until it was too late.

"One night—as a matter of fact it was the night before operations were to have been begun to take the treasure out—Rhara Kulu and the Malays he had corrupted broke loose and attacked the camp. Maynard and Tarrant defended themselves like a couple of heroes, and as they were far better armed than the others, they wiped more than half of the niggers out before Maynard got a bullet in the head. Tarrant told me himself that this transformed his wife into a perfect fury for the time being.

"Her husband had taught her to shoot very respectably, and when he was killed she took his revolvers and blazed away until the last half-dozen of the conspirators threw their weapons down and howled for mercy. One of these was Rhara Kulu himself, so Tarrant shot him on the spot by way of encouraging the others to behave themselves, then the next morning he carefully took the bearings of the gorge in which the treasure lay, put Mrs. Maynard into her palanquin, loaded up the niggers with what was necessary for the journey, and marched them down to the coast.

"For three weeks he kept them on the move with a loaded revolver in each hand. He only took two or three hours' sleep at a time, and then Mrs. Maynard kept watch ready to wake him at the first alarm. When he got them back to Selangor he handed the whole lot over to the authorities, and on his evidence and Mrs. Maynard's they were straightway strung up for murder and attempted piracy."

"And what did he do then? He didn't come home, did he?" asked Beatrice, who had listened with breathless interest to the strange, true-seeming story.

"Oh, yes, that's just what he did do, though very few people knew anything about it. Tarrant is no fool, and he was the only man alive who knew for a fact that the Rajah's treasure was really and truly in existence. He didn't propose to go to the trouble of unearthing it for the Indian Government to step in and take the lion's share, so he brought Mrs. Maynard home, saw her settled quietly down at Brighton, and then came and told the story to Sir Basil.

"A private company was formed, with a capital of £10,000; then Tarrant went out to India and negotiated for a concession which entitled the company to hunt for treasure supposed to have been hidden by pirates on the coast and in the interior of Perak, where the Rajah Mountain is situated. The Indian Government seem to have forgotten the story of the old Rajah, and Tarrant got the concession for £5,000.

"As soon as everything was safe he went to work, and, to the satisfaction of the company and the disgust of the Indian Government, dug over £2,000,000 worth of gold, jewels, and unset precious stones out of that gorge in the mountain side. Tarrant's share came out at more than a million, and Sir Basil took £250,000 out of it, which is a fact that may interest your ladyship to a certain extent——"

At this moment the *portiere* of Lady Apthorpe's reception room was drawn aside, and in the midst of an expectant silence the footman announced, in tones of conscious temporary importance:

"Mr. and Mrs. Ralf Tarrant!"

"Ah, there they are at last!" said Mountford, rising from his seat. "Come and be introduced. Doesn't he look just the sort of fellow to do what he has done? and isn't she lovely? Tarrant's a lucky man."

"Yes," said Beatrice, rising and following him. "I suppose he is; but, somehow, putting your noble self quite out of the question, I think I would rather his wife were Mrs. Tarrant than I."

"Why, what do you mean?" asked Frank, stopping and looking at her with a questioning smile. "To my eyes he is one of the most manly-looking men I ever saw."

"A matter of taste, of course," replied Beatrice, with her eyes fixed on the hero of the moment. "But to my mind, somehow, there seems more of the tiger than the man about him."

"An excellent example of what women call intuition and men call prejudice!"

"Mr. and Mrs. Ralf Tarrant!"

laughed the Honourable Frank in reply, as he gave her his arm and led her forward towards the group of hero-worshippers, in the centre of which stood Ralf Tarrant, explorer, millionaire, and murderer, and Violet, his wife.

1d. **SHORT STORIES.** 1d.

(EVERY TUESDAY.)

The readers of *Short Stories* are provided with half-a-dozen or so short stories every week, suited to the tastes of all readers.

At the present time a serial story entitled "THE OUTLAWS OF THE AIR," by George Griffith, the author of "The Angel of the Revolution," "The Syren of the Skies," &c., &c., is running through its pages. *Short Stories* is profusely illustrated, and provides a larger and better pennyworth of reading matter of this nature than any other similar publication.

Important to Wearers of Fine Linen.

INSTRUCTIONS to prevent the FRAYING of CUFFS and COLLARS, also the wherewithal for a practical test, sent post free on application to R. S. HUDSON, Bank Hall, Liverpool, Manufacturer of

HUDSON'S SOAP

A Fine Powder—In Packets.

THE LADY REPORTER.

SHE was a frail little woman, with great sad eyes and a sweet refined face. Her hair clustered in glossy black ringlets about her well-poised head. She halted hesitatingly before the imposing offices of the *Sussex Chronicle*, and then, regaining her courage, pushed open the swing doors and climbed up the broad stairs to the editor's room. She found that august journalistic luminary in his room and up to his ears in work.

"The fact of the matter is, Miss ——"

"Mrs. Archer," she interposed.

"Mrs. Archer, that we have a larger staff now than we can find work for. I don't see what I can do for you. Have you had any newspaper experience?"

"I have written a number of short stories for the London weeklies and ——"

"Humph! Short stories and reporting are two very different things. However, there can be no harm in seeing what you can do. There is to be a private exhibition of pictures at the Brighton Art Gallery this afternoon. Go and see what you can make of it. Here is the invitation card. There's nothing else at present or I would give you an easier task. Bring your copy to me, please," and the editor pushed back his chair and rose to bow the little lady out of the office.

When James Finlay, the editor of the *Chronicle*, reached the office later on in the day, he found the new aspirant patiently waiting to see him.

"Here is my report, sir," she observed, handing him her copy.

Finlay settled himself down in his chair, blue pencil in hand, and read it through with marked surprise. It was decidedly well written. It was refreshingly original, devoid of all hackneyed phrases, picturesque in description and keen in analytical criticism.

"It is very well written," commented Finlay, laying the article down on his desk and looking up with a smile.

She flushed slightly.

"I am pleased to hear you say so," she said.

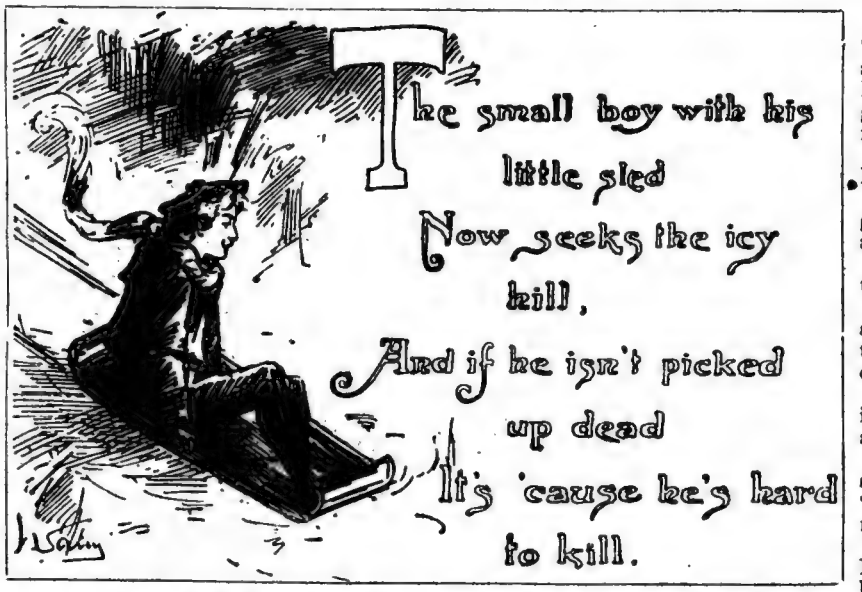
"I shall always do my best."

Whir-r-r-r-r, whir-r-r.

Finlay rushed to the telephone.

"Hullo," he cried. "What! a murder? Yes—yes. Can't you go? I've got no one to send. Can't the Newhaven mystery wait? Why not do the murder first? Oh, of course, I forgot. In Meslana Street did you say? All right. I say, are you there? Hullo! What number? Yes. No. All right. Good-bye."

Finlay returned to his desk with a sigh.



"There's been a terrible murder in Meslana Street," he explained with a smile, as he glanced at the little woman, who sat waiting his further orders. "And the dickens of it is that I haven't got a soul to send. Every one of the reporters is out."

"Send me."

Finlay shook his head.

"Thanks. I'm afraid it's hardly the sort of work one could ask a lady to do. Murders are upsetting, and there are all sorts of unpleasant details which have to be gone into."

"Please let me try, Mr Finlay."

Finlay started. There was something exquisitely pathetic in her appeal. He hesitated, and then he gave way.

"Very well. Here's the number. I'm sorry to ask you to do such unpleasant work, but it certainly would be a very great convenience if you really don't mind. Go to the house, the police-station, and every place where there is the smallest possibility of picking up any clues bearing on the crime. You'd better take a cab."

The little woman nodded her head, a bright light of determination burning in her eyes.

"I hope she won't make a mess of that," reflected Finlay, apprehensively, when a moment later her footsteps had died away down the stairs. "Hanged if I ought to have trusted it to a green hand. It was those eyes of hers, which got round me. Poor little woman. And as for you, James Finlay, you always were a fool where a woman was concerned."

The door opened and the proprietor appeared.

"What's going on to-night, Finlay?"

"There's a queer case at Newhaven, and a murder in Meslana Street. Both are big."

"Who's on the murder."

"I put a woman—Mrs. Archer—on! All the reporters were out, and she thought ——"

"A woman. 'Pon my word, Finlay, that doesn't speak well for your sagacity."

"It could not be helped. She'll manage all right. Do not worry yourself about that."

Time rapidly grew apace and Finlay began to grow restless. The hands of the big clock pointed to midnight. The rush of the night was on in earnest. It had been an unusually eventful day, and column after column had dropped from the busy pens of the staff.

"Put that Meslana Street murder after the leader," shouted the proprietor from his room. "Let me see it in proof."

"Great snakes," thought poor Finlay. "What the dickens has happened to that woman. I've half a mind to go round and see."

At that moment the rattle of wheels was heard in the hushed street below. Several minutes later the new reporter stood in the editor's room.

"Well," exclaimed Finlay, with unnecessary severity.

"I've got a complete account of the murder. I wrote it at home," replied Mrs. Archer. "You may take it from me that all the facts are correct. Here is a photograph of the dead man. Here, that of his murderer."

Finlay took the copy, and in his eager haste he did not see how frightfully pallid she was and how unnaturally bright her eyes grew. For a moment she looked like a galvanised corpse.

"Send round to my house in two hours' time, and I will supply you with another sensation," she remarked in a low voice. "If it's worth anything you might send the cheque for my day's work to my mother. Here is her address. Thank you. I shall go now."

And bidding the editor good night, she left the room.

Like the art report the account of the murder was written in a style which was very superior to anything which appeared in the colums of this Sussex daily paper as a rule. It bristled, however, with sensational detail, and as he read it, Finlay found himself wondering whether the writer could have known the chief actors in the dark crime or whether she had been drawing on her imagination for the vivid story in his hands.

"She either knew the people intimately or else she is a truly journalistic liar," he remarked to his assistant.

"Probably the latter."

"I don't think so," observed the other. "To tell you the truth she impressed me as being an essentially worthy little party. I wonder where she obtained those photographs. It was smart work, you know. I must ask her to-morrow morning."

The article was quickly edited, and hurried up to the composing room.

"Two o'clock," commented the editor, glancing up at a large solemn-faced clock above his desk. "Robinson."

A bright-faced young man hurried into the room.

"Go to Myrtle Villa, Village Square, and see what kind of sensation there is there. Say that Mrs. Archer told you to call."

Half an hour later Robinson dashed into the office. His cheeks were white, and his eyes scared.

"The sensation at Myrtle Villa is the suicide of Mrs. Archer," he whispered. "She was the wife of the man who was murdered in Meslana Street."

"What," shrieked the astounded editor. He took a slip of paper from the reporter's hands, and read it through carefully. And this was Mrs. Archer's sensation.

"Mrs. Annie Thorne, otherwise Annie Archer, committed suicide by taking poison at Myrtle Villa, Village Square, Brighton, this morning at two o'clock. Her husband, John Thorne, was the man who met death at the hands of a woman in Meslana Street, a few hours previously. The husband and wife had been separated a few months. She left a note saying that she could not live without him, and had set out to meet him in the mysterious beyond."

"Poor soul," said the editor, sympathetically. "Who knows what romance lies behind the death of these people."

"Is that murder report in yet?" said the proprieter, bustling up. "Well, don't give that kind of work to a woman again."

"She'll never want another job," replied the editor. But the remark was drowned in the din of the office.

ISSUED MONTHLY. *PRICE SIXPENCE.*

PEARSON'S LIBRARY.

No. 1.—"A GIRL WITHOUT A NAME." (Published October 1st). *Illustrated by* MISS G. DEMAIN HAMMOND and MISS INEZ WARRY.

No. 2.—"THE ADVENTURES OF AN UGLY GIRL." (Published November 1st). *Illustrated by* RAYMOND POTTER and GEORGES MONTBARD.

No. 3.—"THRO' THE BATTLE SMOKE." (Published December 1st). *Illustrated by* A. KEMP TEBBY and RAYMOND POTTER.

To be Continued Monthly.

Each of the above is a complete novel in itself, and contains over One Hundred Illustrations.

PEARSON'S LIBRARY will be forwarded for 6s. per year, post free, from the Publishing Office, Henrietta Street, W.C., and is on sale at all Newsagents and Bookstalls.

A COMPLETE NOVEL FOR SIXPENCE.

Nick's Boy.

IT was five o'clock on Christmas Eve. The cold light of a winter sunset lay upon the melancholy summits of the mountains where the black pines pierced the snow, but on the mining camp in the valley the shadow of coming night had already fallen.

The superintendent's private secretary sat in his rude little office, warmed by a great stove, and surrounded by papers, which he sorted mechanically. His heart was not in his work to-day. Not only was it a time for home thoughts, but the camp had been sorely disturbed that morning.

Those were dangerous times nearly a century ago.

On the edge of the forest, very near the camp, a party had been surprised by Indians, and before they had been driven away one white man had been killed, and a boy fatally wounded.

The secretary shivered as a draught of bitingly cold wind blew upon him suddenly, and he turned to discover that the door had been opened without ceremony. A tall, gaunt man stood in the doorway, black-bearded and powerfully built, with dark, haggard eyes that searched the young man's face in mute appeal, like those of a dog seeking help.

"I say, Doc," he said, in a rough strained voice, "would ye mind settin' a while with my boy?"

It struck the secretary as onimous that he did not say "my kid" as usual.

"Is he worse, Dick?" he questioned anxiously.

"He's ravin' powerfully," answered the man. "And he thinks he's back to his old home in England, and he's a-talkin' to papa and mamma, and beggin' for a Christmas tree. Lord knows, he's never mentioned her afore! I want ye jest while I go down to the woods to git him a tree."

"Good Heavens, man!" cried young Fenton, as he flung his papers into the desk; "do you know the danger of going into those woods to-night?"

"Phil," said the older man, as they went out together, "there can't nothin' hurt me in this world after to-day! And if I don't come back what's the odds? He won't miss me!"—here the rough voice broke—"for he doesn't know me."

"That's hard, old man!" said Philip Fenton, almost tenderly. "Well, go, and I'll do all I can for him."

"That ye will, Doc!" said Nick, wringing his hand as they parted at the door of the hut.

Philip was called "Doc," not only because he had begun life by studying medicine, but because he had a certain lovable good sense about him that made him always helpful. If this quality was womanly, it brought no contempt upon him, for his courage had been proved.

A few years before, at the time of the gold fever, two strangely-assorted men had formed a close alliance. These were a young Englishman, calling himself Charles Underhill, and Dominick Murfree, a man of rude exterior, adrift in the world—a waif, whose history no one knew.

The Englishman's young son—a strong, slender, spirited child—went with him everywhere, sharing all hardships with courageous love. There was a refinement about the pair that no hardship could destroy; and in the father's deep sadness of heart, in the boy's pathetic wondering eyes, there were hints of some home tragedy, unknown to all, save, perhaps, to poor Nick Murfree, their devoted friend and almost servant.

The father died of a wound as the son was now dying; and on his deathbed he entrusted his boy to Nick's rough but faithful keeping. Two years since this occurred had been the nucleus of the man's life; for in those years he lived the perfect life of love.

The boy, with his bright intelligence and loving heart, his strange union of refinement and endurance, and his elfish daring and fascination, had become to the man as his very soul. All the strength of that wild nature centred in this one deep paternal passion. It was one of those elemental loves, "passing the love of woman," which need no closer tie than that of choice.

As Fenton passed into the little cabin a woman rose from the side of the bed.

"I'm glad you could come, Mr. Fenton," she said, "for I must go to my babies."

It was the poor woman whose husband had been killed that morning; and her toil-worn face was wet with bitter tears.

"It do go to the heart," she went on, "to hear the poor boy a-talking about Christmas, and Nick, he's sot on getting him a tree. I'm goin' to git some cotton I've had to stuff quilts with. It looks real peart on a tree, like snow."

She drew her shawl about her and went out, and Fenton took her place.

A beautiful boy of about twelve years old lay on the bed; the flush of fever on his delicately moulded sunburnt face, and its wild light in the blue eyes gave him the appearance of brilliant health and life.

"Papa," he said, "why don't we have the tree? It's Christmas Eve, and mamma is here again. You said she didn't care for us any more, but she's come back, hasn't she? I know you'd forgive her; but you haven't got anything for Christmas, and I'm so ill!"

The English ways of speaking, so quaint and almost forgotten in that wild region, struck Philip's heart, for they were not customary with the boy, who had left home so young. In his dying hour, the old speech and the old thoughts came back to him.

"There are plenty of trees in the Evergreen copse, papa!" moaned the boy, looking up at Fenton, who tried to soothe him, and evidently taking the fair-faced young man for his father.

"I've sent for one, Charlie," said Philip. "They are cutting it now. Just wait a while, and we'll have a jolly tree."

So the boy was quieted for a few moments, and in a shorter time than Fenton thought possible, Nick returned, bearing on his shoulders a young spruce tree, and carrying also a bundle of cotton which he had obtained from the woman.

The boy's eyes lighted up, and he tried to raise himself in the bed, but the pain from the wound in his breast stopped him, and he sank back again, with one brief moan interrupting his weak cries of joy. "Ah, what a beauty!" he said. But for poor Nick there was no word of recognition.

"He never seemed childish afore," said the man, wistfully, apologising for this strange fancy on the part of his manly boy. "It's just the fever. He's been a-talkin' a lot about Christmas lately, and a-jokin' and callin' me his old St. Nick, and I allowed to-night to buy him one of them new rifles o' Jackson's fur Christmas present. But now——"

He stopped, and for an instant a slight relief came to the overcharged heart as one hot slow tear rolled down the dark, hollow cheek.

"My kid," said he, tenderly, as he searched the flushed, brilliant face with aching eyes, "don't ye know me now?"

"No, no," said the boy, fretfully, pushing him away. "Please, papa, put up my tree!"

"He's jest plumb crazy, ain't he?" said Nick, looking at Fenton with the agony of disappointed love in his eyes.

"Yes, yes, he realises nothing," said the young man, hurriedly. "In a few moments he may change, and call for you. There's no accounting for anything in delirium. Don't worry, Nick, but come and fix the tree."

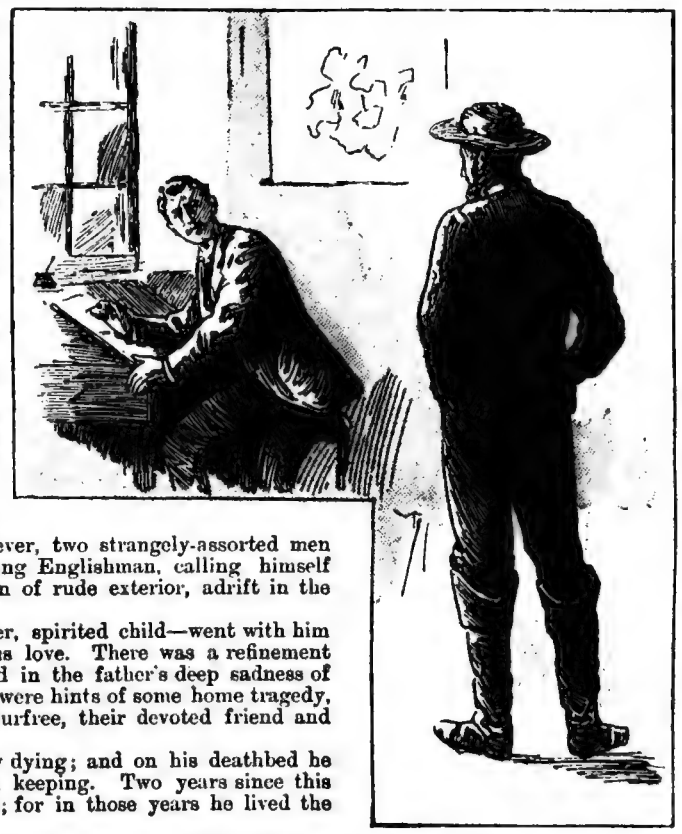
They set it up and adorned it with the cotton, to represent snow. Then they put lighted tallow candles behind it and made a very fair illumination. The boy lay quiet at last, looking at it with a deep and strange content in his blue eyes.

"Thank you, papa," he said simply, looking not at Nick but at Fenton.

It was a strange sight; that bare little room, made beautiful by the lighted tree, and the fine fair face of the dying child. The little cabin was more comfortable than that of most of the men, and the bed was better; Nick had done all he could for his boy, and Charlie's own native refinements had added little touches, like those of a woman; but yet it was a poor place, at its best, and the wind blew coldly through the cracks in the rough walls.

The boy did not feel it to-night, nor did he hear the wailing sound with which it swept across the camp, as if lamenting all the lost lights of far-off homes or bygone Christmas Eves.

Nick sat with his gaunt hands clasped upon his knees, his hungry eyes fixed upon the child. It was only for a little while that he had the joy of seeing him happier; for the pain increased, and a worse form of delirium set in.



"I say, Doc, would ye mind settin' a while with my boy?"

Philip still remained, knowing that if he were missed his explanation would be accepted—and the night wore on.

At last a drowsiness crept over the boy, and Philip knew that the end was near. The blue eyes closed and then opened quietly with a look of returning intelligence. Philip quietly took a little book from his pocket and knelt by the bedside.

What was it to the dying child, or the broken-hearted man, whether the beautiful words he uttered came at the moment from his own heart, or from the heart of the Church of many ages? Enough that they fell upon the ears like music from a happier world brought near. As he ceased the boy seemed to be sleeping.

Suddenly he opened his eyes—they were clear and bright, and very calm.

"Nick!" said he faintly, but very distinctly.

Nick rose and went to him, and the joy in his eyes broke through their haggard look of woe.

"You dear—old boy! Did you—do that—for me?"

He was looking at the poor little Christmas tree.

"You was askin' for it, my boy," murmured Nick, hoarsely.

The small hand crept into Nick's great palm, and one look from the blue eyes was his reward.

"Nick," said Charlie, presently, "I can't breathe—very well. I want you to hold me."

He was gathered up into the strong tender arms, and lay there, quite at peace. And there, in a few moments, he went to sleep.

The next morning he brought to Philip Fenton a sealed paper, which had been left by the boy's father to be opened when he was twenty-one, but not before except in the event of his death.

"I can't open it," said the man in a strange, hushed voice.

Since he had laid down his boy's lifeless form he had seemed dazed, and the look in his eyes was as if the soul had gone out of them.

Philip opened the packet and examined it carefully; then he held it out to Nick, who waved it back.

"I can't take nothin' in," he said. "What is it, Doc?"

"Nick, your boy was of noble birth in England. He was heir to a title and a great estate. It might have happened that, as he grew older, he would have been lost to you. The Lord has kept him for you. Where he is now he will love you and remember you for ever, Nick, and do not forget this—he will wait for you."

Then, for the first time, Nick bowed his head upon his hands and wept. In his humility he never dreamed but that the boy's high estate would have separated him from his adopted father. In life he must indeed have lost him.

"If the Lord did that for me, Phil," he said, at last, "I'm bound to be thankful! It's hard to live—but if the Lord'll forget all that's agin me, and let me come to where he's a-waitin' for me——"

"Of course He will," said Philip, with calm decision.

The man's great dark eyes dwelt upon Philip's face, and, as he looked, the soul awoke within them, strong and beautiful. But he only said:

"I thank ye kindly, Phil; ye've done me good!" And he rose slowly and went out alone.

Tommy's Enjoyable Christmas.

"I HAD a fine Christmas," said Benny to Tommy.

"So did I," replied Tommy.

"I had as many oranges and as much turkey as I could eat," Benny went on.

"Got any presents?" asked Tommy.

"Yes. Papa gave me a pair of skates and Uncle Henry sent me a book."

"Was that all?" asked Tommy.

"Why, yes; that was about all," replied Benny, with some misgivings.

"Then just listen to what I had. Papa gave me a bicycle, mamma gave me a magic lantern, I had a big box of sweets from Aunt Sue, and a drum from Uncle John, and a lot of oranges, and I had turkey no end, and I had lots and lots of plum pudding, and I had an awful stomachache, and two doctors. You can't beat that."

THE DIVINATIONS OF KALA PERSAD.

By HEADON HILL.

II.

The Divination of the Zagury Capsules.

ON the first floor of one of the handsome buildings that are rapidly replacing "Old London" in the streets running from the Strand to the Embankment, was a suite of offices bearing on the outer door the words "Confidential Advice," and, below, in smaller letters, "Mark Poignand, Manager." The outer offices, providing accommodation for a couple of up-to-date clerks, and a lady typist, were resplendent with brass-furnished counters and cathedral glass partitions; and the private room in the rear, used by the Manager, was fitted up in the quietly luxurious style of a club smoking-room.

But even this latter did not form the innermost sanctum of all, for at its far corner a locked door led into a still more private chamber, which was never entered by any of the inferior staff, and but rarely by the Manager himself. In this room—strange anomaly—within earshot of the thronging traffic of the Strand—a little wizened old Hindoo mostly sat cross-legged, playing with a basket of cobras, and chewing betel-nut from morning to night. Now and again he would be called on to lay aside his occupations for a brief space, and these intervals were quickly becoming a factor to be reckoned with by those who desired to envelop their doings in darkness.

Mark Poignand, though the younger son of a good family, possessed only a modest capital, bringing him an income of under three hundred a year, and after his success in the matter of the Afghan kukhri, he was taken with the idea of entering, professionally, on the field of "private investigation." He was shrewd enough to see that without Kala Persad's aid his journey to India would have ended in failure, and he determined to utilise the snake-charmer's instinctive faculty as the mainstay of the new undertaking.

He had no difficulty in working upon the old man's sense of gratitude to induce him to go to England, and all that remained was to sell out a portion of his capital and establish himself in good style as a private investigator, with Kala Persad installed in the back room. A rumour had got about that he had successfully conducted a delicate mission to India, and this, in conjunction with the novelty of such a business being run by a young man not unknown in society, brought him clients from the start.

At first Mark felt some anxiety as to the outcome of his experiment, but by compelling himself, with an effort, to be true to the system he had drawn up, he found that his first few unimportant cases worked out with the best results. Briefly his system was this. When an inquiry was placed in his hands he would lay the facts as presented to him before Kala Persad, and he would then be guided in future operations by his follower's suspicions. On one or two occasions he had nearly failed through a tendency to prefer his own judgment to the snake-charmer's instinct, but he had been able to retrace his steps in time to prove the correctness of Kala Persad's original solution, and to save the credit of the office.

It devolved upon himself entirely to procure evidence and discover how the mysteries were brought about, and in this he found ample scope for his ingenuity, for Kala Persad was profoundly ignorant of the methods adopted by those whom he suspected. It was more than half the battle, however, to start with the weird old man's finger pointed, so far unerringly, at the right person, and Mark Poignand recognised that without the Oracle of the back room he would have been nowhere. Some of Kala Persad's indications pointed in directions into which his own wildest flights of fancy would never have led him.

It was not till Poignand had been in practice for nearly three months that a case was brought to him involving the capital charge—a case of such terrible interest to one of our oldest noble families that its unravelling sent clients thronging to the office, and assured the success of the enterprise. One murky, fog-laden morning in December he was sitting in the private room, going through the day's correspondence, when the clerk brought him a lady's visiting card, engraved with the name of "Miss Lascelles."

"What is she like?" asked Poignand.

"Well-dressed, young, and, as far as I can make out under her thick veil, good-looking," replied the clerk. "I should judge from her voice that she is anxious and agitated."

"Very well," said Poignand; "show her in when I ring," and the other having retired, he rose and went to the back wall, where an oil painting, heavily framed and tilted at a considerable angle, was hung. Behind the picture was a sliding panel which he shot back, leaving an opening about a foot square into the inner room.

"Ho! there, Kala Persad," he called through, "a lady is here with a secret; are you ready?"

As soon as a wheezy voice on the other side chuckled "Ha, Sahib!" in reply, Poignand readjusted the picture, but left the aperture open. Settling himself in his chair he touched a bell, and the next moment was rising to receive his client—a tall, graceful girl, clad in expensive mourning. Directly the clerk had left the room she raised her veil, displaying a face winningly beautiful, but intensely pale, and marked with the traces of recent grief. Her nervousness was so painfully evident that Poignand hastened to reassure her.

"I hope you will try and treat me as though I were a private friend," he said. "If you can bring yourself to give me your entire confidence I have no doubt that I can serve you; but it is necessary that you should state your case with the utmost fulness."

His soothing tones had the desired effect. "I have every confidence in you," was the reply, given in a low, sweet voice. "It is not that that troubles me, but the fearful peril threatening the honour, and perhaps the life, of one very dear to me. I was tempted to come to you, Mr Poignand, because of the marvellous insight which enabled you to recover the Duchess of Gainsborough's jewel-case the other day. It seemed almost as though you could read the minds of persons you have not even seen, and, Heaven knows, there is a secret in some dark mind somewhere that I must uncover."

"Let me have the details as concisely as possible, please," said Poignand, pushing his own chair back a little, so as to bring the sound of her voice more in line with the hidden opening.

"You must know, then," Miss Lascelles began, "that I live with my father, who is a retired general of the Indian Army, at the Elms—a house on the outskirts of Beechfield in Buckinghamshire. I am engaged to be married to the second son of Lord Bradstock—the Hon. Harry Furnival, as he is called by courtesy. The matter which I want you to investigate is the death of Lord Bradstock's eldest son, Leonard Furnival, which took place last week."

"Indeed!" exclaimed Poignand; "I saw the death announced in the paper, but there was no hint of anything wrong. I gathered that the death arose from natural causes."

"So it was believed at the time," replied Miss Lascelles, "but, owing to circumstances that have since occurred, the body was exhumed on the day after the funeral. As the result of an autopsy held yesterday, Leonard's death is now attributed to poison, and an inquest has been ordered for to-morrow. In the meanwhile, by some cruel combination of chances, Harry is suspected of having given the poison to the brother whom he loved so well, in order to clear the way for his own succession, and the terrible part of it all is that his father, and others who ought to stand by him in his need, share in that suspicion. He has not the slightest wish to go away or to shirk inquiry; but he believes that he is already watched by the police, and that he will certainly be arrested after the inquest to-morrow.

"I must go back a little, so as to make you understand exactly what is known to have happened—and, also, what is supposed to have happened—at Bradstock Hall, which is a large mansion standing about a mile and a half from the small country town of Beechfield.

"For the last twelve months of his life—or, to speak more correctly, for the last ten months—Leonard was given up as in a hopeless consumption, from which he could not possibly recover. At the commencement of his illness, which arose from a chill caught while out shooting, he was attended by Dr. Youle, of Beechfield. Almost from the first the doctor gave Lord Bradstock to understand that his eldest son's lungs were seriously affected, and that his recovery was very doubtful. As time went on Dr. Youle became confirmed in his view, and, despite the most constant

"I have every confidence in you," was the reply.

attention, the invalid gradually declined till, about two months ago, Lord Bradstock determined to have a second medical opinion.

"Though Dr. Youle was very confident that he had diagnosed and treated the case correctly, he consented to meet Dr. Lucas, the other Beechfield medical man, in consultation. After a careful examination, Dr. Lucas entirely disagreed with Dr. Youle as to the nature of the disease, being of the opinion that the trouble arose from pneumonia, which should yield to the proper treatment for that malady.

"This meant, of course, that if he was right there was still a prospect of the patient's recovery; and so buoyed up was Lord Bradstock with hope that he installed Dr. Lucas in the place of Dr. Youle, who was very angry at the doubt cast on his treatment. The new regimen worked well for some weeks, and Leonard began to gain ground, very slowly, but still so decidedly, that Dr Lucas was hopeful of getting him downstairs by the early spring.

"Imagine, then, the consternation of everyone when, one morning last week, the valet, on going into the room, found the poor fellow so much worse that Dr. Lucas had to be hurriedly sent for, and only arrived in time to see his patient die. Death was immediately preceded by the spitting of blood, and by violent paroxyms of coughing; and these being more or less symptoms of both the maladies that had been in turn treated, no one thought of foul play for an instant. Discussion of the case was confined to the fact that Dr. Youle was now proved to have been right and Dr. Lucas wrong.

"The first hint of anything irregular came from Dixon, the valet, on Monday last, the day of the funeral. After the ceremony he was clearing away from the sick room the last sad traces of Leonard's illness, when, among the medicine bottles and appliances, he came across a small box of gelatine capsules, which he remembered to have seen Mr. Harry Furnival give to his brother the day before the latter's death. Thinking that they had been furnished by Dr. Lucas, and there being a good many left in the box, he put them aside with a stethoscope, and one or two things which the Doctor had left, and, later in the day, took them over to his house at Beechfield.

"The moment Dr. Lucas saw the capsules he disclaimed having furnished them, or even having prescribed anything of the kind, and expressed surprise at Dixon's statement that he had seen Harry present the box to his brother. Recognising them as a freely advertised patent specific, he was curious to test their composition, and having opened one with this purpose in view, he at once made the most dreadful discovery.

"Instead of its original filling—probably harmless, whatever it may have been—the capsule contained a substance which he believed to be a fatal dose of a vegetable poison, little known in this country but in common use among the natives of Madagascar, called *tanghin*. Turning again to one of the entire capsules he found slight traces of the gelatine case having been melted and re-sealed!

"I cannot blame him for the course he took. It was his duty to report the

TEMPERANCE WINES

CAN BE MADE WITH

MASON'S Wine Essences

Most Refreshing at Children's Parties and all Social Gatherings. Non-Alcoholic, Pure, and very Refreshing.

A Lady writes:—"*The 6d. bottle of Ginger Wine Essence made several bottles of most delicious wine, far better than what we have paid 2s. a bottle for. It is most suitable for children's parties.*"

GINGER, LEMON, ORANGE, RASPBERRY, &c.

Try the Ginger and Elderberry. The Wine will be just ready for Christmas.

ALSO MAKERS OF MASON'S

EXTRACT OF HERBS.
EXTRACT OF HOPS. For Hop Ale or Bitters.
EXTRACT SARSAPARILLA. For Porter.
EXTRACT GINGER. For Sparkling Ginger Beer.
EXTRACT GINGER ALE. For Ginger Ale.
MASON'S LEMONINE. For Lemonade.
MASON'S CIDERINE. For Devonshire Cider.
MASON'S WINTER EXTRACT. For Winter Ale.

A Teaspoonful of any of the above Extracts will make one gallon.

Bottles, 6d., 1s., and 2s. each.

BEWARE OF VILE IMITATIONS.

Send nine stamps for SAMPLE of Wine Essence, naming fruit flavour, or 15 stamps for both Wine Essence and Extract.

SOLE INVENTORS AND MANUFACTURERS—

NEWBALL AND MASON, NOTTINGHAM.

THE PATENT

'Octopus'

ANTI-INCRUSTATOR

AUTOMATICALLY COLLECTS the 'FUR' in KETTLES, KITCHEN BOILERS, and PIPES.

"Sherborne House,
"Northleach, Gloucester,
"June 5, 1894.
"LORD SHERBORNE wishes to have two Anti-Incrustators to put in a high pressure kitchen boiler. Those he has in use have proved of great service."

Prices.

No.	Each.
1. Kettle and Urn Size	2/6
2. Small Kitchen Boiler Size ..	5/-
3. Medium Kitchen Boiler Size ..	7/6

"Carrigoran,
"Newmarket-on-Fergus,
"Co. Clare,
"August 13, 1894.
"LADY FITZGERALD incloses a postal order for 15s. She finds the 'Octopus' most useful, both for boiler and kettle."

THE PATENT

"SANITARY" SINK BASKET.

Stands in corner of kitchen sink, retains all solid matter from dirty water thrown into it, and keeps waste-pipe always clean.

PREVENTS BAD ODOURS.

SOLD BY ALL IRONMONGERS.

PRICES.

	Enamelled White on Iron	Enamelled Brown on Copper	Silver-Plated on Copper
1. 9 in. ...	1/6	2/6	3/9
2. 10½ in.	2/-	2/9	4/6
3. 12 in.	2/6	3/3	5/9
4. Semi-circular shape (14 in. at back)	2/6	3/3	5/9

Several other sizes and shapes in stock.

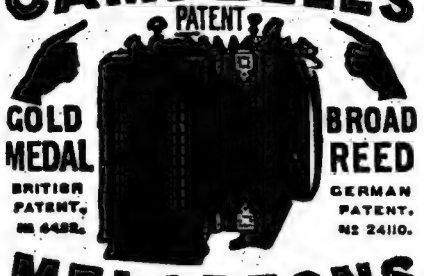
If any difficulty in procuring enclose three stamps extra for postage and send to the Patentees and Sole Manufacturers:

LANGSTAFFE, BANKS, & PECKOVER,
19 AND 21, BURY STREET, GREAT RUSSELL STREET, W.C.

BEST XMAS PRESENT.

MUSIC IN THE HOUSE MAKES CHEERFUL HAPPY HOMES

CAMPBELL'S



GOLD MEDAL BRITISH PATENT, No 6482.

BROAD REED GERMAN PATENT. No 24110.

MELODEONS

Have the Largest Sale of any Musical Instrument in the World.

HAPPY HOURS FOR ALL.

NO HOME SHOULD BE WITHOUT ONE.

CAMPBELL'S World-famed MELODEONS have Organ and Celestial Tone and Charming Bell Accompaniments. The Solemn Psalm, the Soul-Stirring Hymn, the Cheerful Song, and the Merry Dance can all be played on these Charming Instruments.
NO KNOWLEDGE OF MUSIC IS REQUIRED BY THE PLAYER.

CAMPBELL'S GOLD MEDAL MELODEONS.

The Best Instrument for the Parlour, the Family Circle, the Concert Room, and the Dancing Party.

CAMPBELL'S PATENT MELODEONS.
NO DECEPTION HERE.
MONEY RETURNED IF NOT SATISFIED.
SPECIAL OFFER TO THE READERS OF
PEARSON'S WEEKLY CHRISTMAS NUMBER.
CAMPBELL'S "GEM" MELODEON, 6s. 6d.
CAMPBELL'S "MINIATURE" MELODEON, 10s. 6d.
CAMPBELL'S "PARAGON" MELODEON, 14s.
CAMPBELL'S "FAVOURITE" MELODEON, 16s. 6d.
Worth Double the Money. Selling in Thousands.
Either of the above sent CARRIAGE PAID in Great Britain, on receipt of P.O.O.

CUT THIS OUT AND SEND WITH ORDER

NO DECEPTION HERE.

100,000 TESTIMONIALS.

TESTIMONY FROM MR. J. KEIR HARDIE, M.P.
"After daily testing the Patent Melodeon supplied to me by Messrs. CAMPBELL & Co., I have much pleasure in saying that it is a most marvellous musical production at the money. It is got up in an excellent style, the finish being superior. It is, besides, a strong and durable instrument."

Important Testimonial from PROFESSOR BROWN, the CHAMPION Melodeon Player of Great Britain, Ireland, and Wales.—"Campbell's Patent Melodeons are the finest instruments that have ever come under my touch, and only require a trial to advertise themselves." CAMPBELL'S PATENT MELODEONS ARE THE ONLY GENUINE MELODEONS IN THE MARKET. BEWARE OF WORTHLESS IMITATIONS.

N.B.—All lovers of music should at once send for our New Illustrated Previews Price List for Season 1894-5, now ready. 150,000 of these valuable lists sent out yearly. Send Penny Stamp to

CAMPBELL & CO., Musical Instrument Makers,
116, TRONGATE, GLASGOW.
Established 50 years

ECZEMA CURED BY

Pimples, Blotches, Skin Eruptions, Ulcerated Bad Legs, Sores, Ringworms, and Chilblains.

CULLWICK'S Sovereign Remedies. SKIN OINTMENT

For Outward Application, and

BLOOD TABLETS for Internal Use.

LADIES will find the combined treatment invaluable for keeping the SKIN and COMPLEXION CLEAR and free from all Blemish and Irritation.

"Cullwick's" have a World-Wide Reputation.

Either Ointment or Tablets 1s. 1½d., from all Chemists; or post free, 1s. 3d., from MARTIN Chemist Southampton.

MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS

Of every description at Popular Prices.

BANDS SUPPLIED ON THE BEST TERMS.

See List A for Brass, Military, and Orchestral Instruments, Fittings, &c. List B, Banjos, Mandolines, Guitars, Autoharps, &c. List C, Musical Boxes. List Part 1, Pianos, Organs, Harmoniums. Post free.

JOSEPH RILEY & SONS,
25 and 23, Constitution Hill,
BIRMINGHAM.

THE BEST AND CHEAPEST HOUSE IN THE KINGDOM.
Established nearly half a century.

Quickly correct all irregularities, remove all obstructions, and relieve the distressing symptoms so prevalent with the sex. Boxes, 1/1½ and 2/9 (the latter contains three times the quantity) of all Chemists, or will be sent anywhere on receipt of 15 or 34 stamps by the maker, E. T. TOWLE, Chemist, Nottingham. *Beware of Imitations, Injurious and Worthless.*

A NEW DRESS FOR 6D.

A STARTLING FACT.

It is a positive fact that you can make your worn and shabby dresses look like new, by using Crawshaw's Dyes. Anyone can use them, and you have no idea of their usefulness until you have tried them. You can Dye & Dress with one 6d. Box, or

A Child's Frock for 3d.

Laces, Ribbons, Curtains, Feathers, etc; in fact, almost anything can be made to look like new by the use of Crawshaw's Dyes. Simple directions with each box.
Sold by all Chemists, 3d. and 6d., or post free for 1d. extra, from

E. CRAWSHAW & CO.,
80, Fann Street, Aldersgate Street, London, E.C.

Notice.

PERSONS subject to eye disorders should know that any affliction can be cured by Singleton's Golden Eye Ointment, but it must be Singleton's. Of all chemists and drug stores at 2/- per pot. 300 years' reputation. "How to preserve the Eyesight," a little book of value to every family in which there is a case of weak eyes, will be forwarded free to any address by Stephen Green, 210, Lambeth Road, London.

GIVEN AWAY

REVULCANISED GOLD MEDAL RUBBER STAMPS.

Your Name, your Monogram, bottle of Endorsing Ink, two Pads, Box, and Brush, for 6d., post free; with Marking Ink, 1s. 3d. Nickel Silver Pen and Pencil Case with Name Stamp, 6d. Nickel Silver Name and Address Stamp, 9d. Watch Case beautifully chased, with Name and Address Stamp, 1s.; and every other description of Rubber Stamp. Endorsing and Indelible Inks, Stencils, Hand-Printing Appliances, etc., at half the usual price. Send for List of Hundred Illustrations. Agents wanted. Address to

CRYSTAL PALACE (JOHN BOND'S DAUGHTERS) GOLD MEDAL MARKING INK WORKS, 75, SOUTHGATE ROAD, LONDON, N.

CAUTION.—The Original and Genuine Ink Label has the Trade Mark—"Crystal Palace."

THE WONDERFUL

ORCHESTRAL ORGANETTE.

3 STOPS

Direct from the Patentee and Sole Maker at WHOLESALE PRICES.

Write at once for Catalogue of Tunes and Full Particulars.

84s. Organette for 35s. Cash,

Or on EASY PAYMENTS of 10s. deposit and 5s. monthly. Price 40s. Delivered when first 10s. is paid.

By Royal Letters Patent.

A MERE CHILD CAN PLAY IT.

Plays Hymns, Popular Airs, Quadrilles, Waltzes, Polkas, Reels, Hornpipes, &c., &c. Any tune can be played with artistic effect by any one. No musical knowledge required. MOST MARVELLOUS INSTRUMENT IN THE WORLD. Money returned to any one dissatisfied. *Mention this Paper.*

J. M. DRAPER, Organette Works, BLACKBURN.

£20 TOBACCONISTS (commencing). See Illd. Guide (259 pages), 3d. "How to open a Cigar Store, £20 to £2,000"—TOBACCONISTS' OUTFITTING Co., 186, Euston Road, London, N.B.—Shop-fitters and Showcase makers for all trades. Estimates free. Manager: HY. MYERS, Estd. 1866.

THE

"LANGUAGE OF FLOWERS"

Is our Special Series of

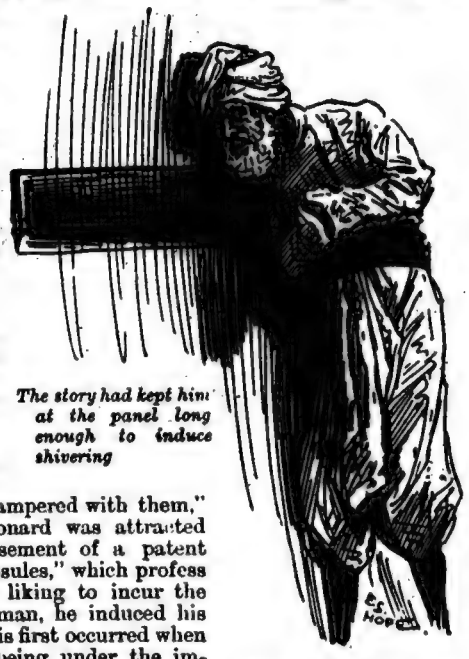
PERSONAL GREETING

XMAS CARDS.

Beautifully hand-tinted flowers, &c., with appropriate meanings. 1 dozen Cards (various shapes) printed with sender's name and address, and envelopes, for 4/- post free. Send for our Descriptive Catalogue of Novel and Artistic Personal Xmas Cards, from 2/- dozen, gratis on application. These Cards are the exclusive productions of

A. SHARP WALKER & Co.,
HOLBORN PLACE, HIGH HOLBORN, LONDON, W.C.

discovery, and, apart from this he was naturally anxious to follow up a theory which would prove his own opinion, and not Dr. Youle's, to have been right. For if Leonard Furnival had really died by poison, it was still likely that, given a fair chance, he might have verified his, Dr. Lucas', prediction of recovery. The necessary steps were taken, and the examination of the body, conducted by the Home Office authorities, proved Dr. Lucas to be right in both points. Not only was it shown that Leonard Furnival undoubtedly died from the effects of the poison, but it was clearly demonstrated that he was recovering from the pneumonia for which Dr Lucas was treating him."



The story had kept him at the panel long enough to induce shivering

"You have stated the case admirably, Miss Lascelles," said Poignand. "There is yet one important point left, though. How does Mr. Harry Furnival account for his having provided the deceased with these capsules?"

"He admits that he procured them for his brother at his request, and he indignantly denies that he tampered with them," was the reply. "It seems that Leonard was attracted some months ago by the advertisement of a patent medicine known as the "Zagury Capsules," which profess to be a sleep-producing tonic. Not liking to incur the professional ridicule of his medical man, he induced his brother to procure them for him. This first occurred when Dr Youle was in attendance, and, being under the impression that they did him some good, he continued to take them while in Dr. Lucas' care. Harry was in the habit of purchasing them quite openly at the chemist's in Beechfield as though for himself, but he says that before humouring his brother he took the precaution of asking Dr. Youle if the capsules were harmless, and received an affirmative reply. Unfortunately Dr. Youle, though naturally anxious to refute the poison theory, has forgotten the circumstance, both he and Dr. Lucas having been successively ignorant of the use of the capsules."

"You say that Lord Bradstock believes in his son's guilt?" asked Poignand.

"He has not said so in so many words," replied Miss Lascelles, "but he refuses to see him till the matter is cleared up. Lord Bradstock is a very stern man, and Leonard was always his favourite. My dear father and I are the only ones to refuse to listen to the rumours against Harry that are flying about Beechfield. We know that Harry could no more have committed a crime than Lord Bradstock himself, and papa would have come with me here to-day were he not laid up with gout. And now, Mr Poignand, can you help us? It is almost too much to expect you to do anything in time to prevent an arrest, but—but will you *try?*"

The circumstances demanded a guarded answer. "Indeed I will," said Poignand. "It is not my custom to give a definite opinion till I have had an opportunity to look into a case, but I shall go down to Beechfield presently—it is only an hour's run, I think—and I will call upon you later in the day. I trust by then to be able to report progress."

At his request Miss Lascelles added a few particulars about the persons living at Bradstock Hall on the day of the death—besides Lord Bradstock and his two sons there were only the servants—and took her leave, being anxious to catch the next train home. Poignand waited till her cab wheels sounded in the street below, then rose hastily, and, having first closed the sliding panel, passed into the room beyond.

He looked thoughtful and worried, for he could not—rack his brains as he would—see any other solution to the puzzle than the one he was called upon to refute. It was true that the details of which he was, so far, in possession, were of the broadest, but every one of them pointed to Harry Furnival—the admittedly secret purchaser of the capsules—as the only person who could have given them their deadly attributes. And then to back up that admission there loomed up, in the way of a successful issue, the damning supplement of a powerful motive. The tenant of the back room, he fully expected, would confirm his own impression—that they were called on to champion a lost cause.

There was nothing, at first sight, as he entered the plainly furnished apartment either to reassure or to dash his hopes. Kala Persad despised the two chairs that had been provided for his accommodation, and spent most of his time squatting or reclining on the Indian charpoy which had been unearthed for him from some East-end opium den. He was sitting on the edge of it now, with his skinny brown hands stretched out to the warmth of a glowing fire, for Miss Lascelles' story had kept him at the panel long enough to induce shivering, and, if there was one thing that made him repent his bargain, it was the cold of an English winter.

At his feet, like-minded with their owner, the cobras squirmed and twisted in the basket which had first excited Poignand's curiosity on the midnight solitudes of the Sholapur road.

"Well?" said Poignand, "do you know enough English by this time to have understood what the lady said, or must I repeat it?"

The old man raised his filmy eyes and regarded the other with a puckering of the leathery brows that might have meant anything from contempt to deep reverence. "Words—seprit words—tell Kala Persad nothing, Sahib," he said, "all words together—what you call one burra jumble—help Kala Persad to pick kernel from the nut. Mem Sahib i-sh spoke many things no use, but I understand enough to read secret. Why!" with infinite scorn, "the secret reads itself."

Poignand's heart sank within him. "I was afraid it was rather too clear a case for us to be of any use," he said.

The snake-charmer, as though he had not heard, went on to recapitulate the heads of the story in little snappy jerks. "One old burra Lord Sahib, big estates—two son, one very sick. First one hakim [doctor] try to cure; no use. Then other hakim; no use too—sick man die. Other son bring physic—poison physic—give him brother. Servant man find poison after dead. Old Lord angry; says his son common *budmash* [murderer]; but Missee Mem Sahib, betrothed of Harry, she say no, and come buy wisdom of Kala Persad. You not think that plain enough, Sahib?"

"Uncommonly so," said Poignand, dejectedly, "It is pretty clear that the Mem Sahib, as you call her, wants us to undertake a job not exactly in our line of business. If we are to satisfy her we shall have to prove that a guilty man is innocent."

"Yah! Yah—ah—ah—ah!" Kala Persad drawled, hugging himself, and rocking to and fro in delight. And before Poignand could divine his intention he had leaped from the charpoy to hiss with the betel-stained lips an emphatic sentence into the ear of his employer. Poignand first started back in astonishment, then listened gravely. Having thus unburdened himself, Kala Persad returned to the warmth of the fire, nodding and mouthing and muttering, much as when his wizened face had peered from among the bushes in Major Merwood's garden. The old man was excited; the jungle-instinct of pursuit was strong upon him, and he began to croon weird noises to his cobras.

Poignand looked at the red-turbaned, huddled figure almost in awe; then went slowly back into his own room. "It is marvellous," he muttered to himself. "As usual the solution is the very last thing one would have thought of, and yet, when once presented in shape, is distinctly possible. It is on the cards that he may be wrong, but I will fight it out on that line."

* * * * * * * *

Early in the afternoon of the same day there was some commotion at the Beechfield railway station on the arrival of a London train, through the station-master being called to a first-class compartment in which a gentleman had been taken suddenly ill. The passenger, who was booked through to the North, was at his own request removed from the train to the adjacent Railway Hotel, where he was deposited, weak and shivering all over with ague, in the landlord's private room at the back of the bar.

The administration of some very potent brown brandy caused him to recover sufficiently to give some account of himself, and to inquire if medical skill was within the capabilities of Beechfield. He was an officer in the army, it appeared,—Captain Hawkes of the 24th Lancers—and was home on sick leave from India, where he had contracted the intermittent fever that was his present trouble.

"I ought to have known better than to travel on one of the days when this infernal scourge was due," he said, "but having done so, I must make the best of it. Are there any doctors in the place who are not absolute duffers?"

The landlord, anxious for the medical credit of Beechfield, informed his guest that there was a choice of two qualified practitioners. "Dr. Youle is the old-established man, sir, and accounted clever by some; Dr. Lucas is younger, and lately set up, though he is getting on better since his lordship took him up at the Hall."

"I don't care who took him up," replied Captain Hawke irascibly. "Which was the last to lose a patient?—that will be as good a test as anything."

"Well, sir, I suppose, in a manner of speaking, Dr. Lucas was," said the landlord, "seeing that the Honourable Leonard died under his care; but people are saying that Mr. Harry ——"

"That will do," interposed the invalid with military testiness; "don't worry me with your Toms and Harrys. Send for the other man—Youle, or whatever his name is."

The subservient landlord, much impressed with the Captain's imperious petulance, which bespoke an ability and willingness to pay for the best, went out to execute the errand in person. The moment his broad back had disappeared into the outer regions Captain Hawke, doubtless under the influence of the brown brandy, grew so much better that he sat up and looked about him.

The bar-parlour in which he found himself was partly separated from the private bar by a glass partition, having a movable window that had been left open. The customers were thus both audible and visible to the belated traveller, who, strangely enough for a dapper young captain of Lancers, evinced a furtive interest in their personality and conversation. The first was chiefly of the country tradesman type, while the latter consisted of the "'E done it, sure enough," style of argument, usual in such places when rustic stolidity is startled by the commission of some serious crime.

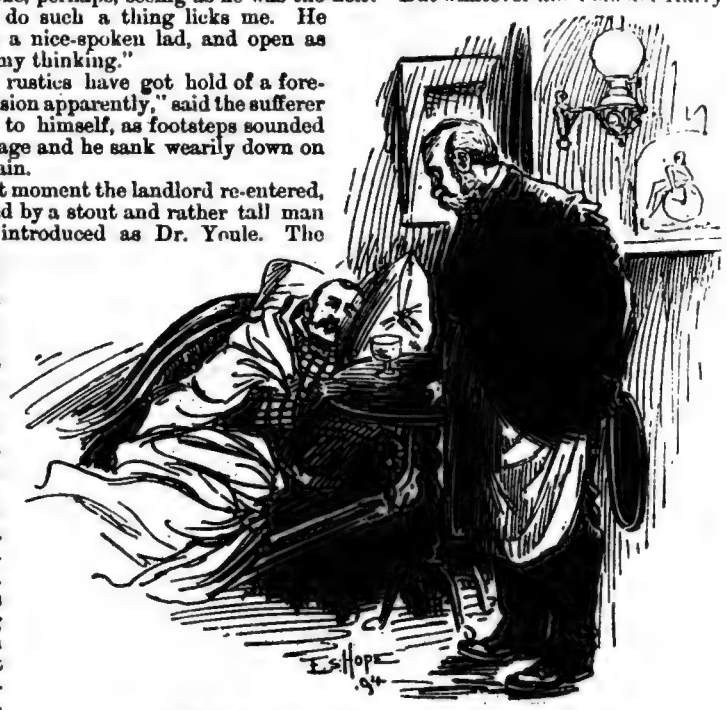
"There was two 'tecs from Scotland Yard watching the Hall all night. 'Tain't no use his trying to bolt," said the local butcher.

"They do say as how the warrant's made out already," put in another, "only they won't lock him up till to-morrow, owing to wanting his evidence at the inquest. Terrible hard on his Lordship, ain't it?"

"That be so," added a third worthy; "the old Lord was always partial to Leonard—natural like, perhaps, seeing as he was the heir. But whatever ailed Master Harry to go and do such a thing licks me. He was always a nice-spoken lad, and open as the day to my thinking."

"These rustics have got hold of a foregone conclusion apparently," said the sufferer from ague to himself, as footsteps sounded in the passage and he sank wearily down on the sofa again.

The next moment the landlord re-entered, accompanied by a stout and rather tall man whom he introduced as Dr. Youle. The doctor's age might have been forty-five, and his figure, just tending to middle-aged stoutness, was encased in the regulation black frock coat of his profession. There was nothing about him to suggest even a remote connection with the tragedy that was engrossing the town. In fact, the expression of his broad face, taken as a whole, was that of one on good terms with himself and with all the world; though it is a question whether the large, not to say "hungry" mouth, if studied separately, did not discount the value of its perpetual smile. He entered with the mingled air of importance and genial respect which the occasion demanded.



"That will do," interposed the invalid; "don't worry me."

The Captain's manner to the doctor differed from his manner to the landlord. Leaving medical skill out of the question, he recognised that he had a gentleman and a man of some local position to deal with, and he modified his petulance accordingly. The landlord had already told the doctor the history of his arrival, so that it only remained to describe his sensations and the nature of his ailment. The latter, indeed, was more or less apparent; for the shivering was still sufficiently violent to shake the horse-hair sofa on which he lay.

"The surgeon of my regiment used to give me some stuff that relieved this horrid trembling instantly," said the Captain; "but I never could get him to part with the prescription. However, I daresay, Doctor, that you know of something equally efficacious."

First Grand "Pioneer" Reduction Sale.

REMARKS.—A lady customer writes complaining that we send out too large a Carpet for the money. Be this so or not, we send out no Carpet measuring less than 6ft. by 9ft.—even for 3s. 6d.

TEST THEM. THEY WILL SURPRISE YOU.

IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUSTICE (CHANCERY DIVISION).—HODGSON v. WEBB BROTHERS.—On the 18th day of July, 1890, his Lordship, Mr. Justice Chitty, granted an interim injunction restraining Messrs. Webb Brothers, of Hackney Wick, from infringing Mr. Fredk. Hodgson's Trade Mark "Eclipse," No. 93,774 (of Leeds).

EXTRAORDINARY REDUCTIONS
100,000 "ECLIPSE"
CARPETS
(REGISTERED).

GUARANTEED GENUINE BARGAINS.

SALE PRICE, **3/6** EACH.

This Gigantic Offer is a Special Contract made with Readers of THE PEARSON'S WEEKLY CHRISTMAS NUMBER *only.*

We will FORWARD DIRECT from the LOOMS to any ADDRESS on RECEIPT of AMOUNT, a GENUINE WOVEN, SEAMLESS, REVERSIBLE CARPET, the LARGEST EVER SOLD at the PRICE.

SALE PRICE, **3/6** EACH.

Suitable for Sitting-room or Bedroom, Bordered and Woven in Art Colours, large enough to cover any ordinary-sized room, as an advertisement for our goods, thus saving any Middle Profits. Remember these are Woven, not Printed, and are made of a material almost equal to Wool. Thousands of these Carpets and Rugs have already been sold at almost Double above Prices. A Rug sent with Carpet, 1s. extra.

Kilkea Castle, Magency, Co. Kildare, August 17th, 1894.

LADY EVA FITZGERALD writes: "The 'Eclipse' Carpets supplied by Messrs. F. Hodgson & Son—her ladyship is much pleased with them."

SPECIAL OFFER.

TWO CARPETS AND TWO RUGS - - - - - - - 8/-
FOUR CARPETS AND FOUR RUGS - - - - - - - 15/6

Value unequalled in the Annals of Advertising. As a favour, kindly examine and compare these Carpets.

SATISFACTION GUARANTEED.

DO NOT MISS THIS OPPORTUNITY. IT MAY NOT OCCUR AGAIN.

The "PEARSON'S WEEKLY XMAS NO." CARPET COUPON, 25/12/94.
On receipt of this Coupon and P.O.O. or stamps for amount, we guarantee to send goods as above to your address in any part of the United Kingdom. Cash returned in full if not satisfied.
(Signed) F. HODGSON & SON.

All Orders despatched same day in rotation as they arrive by post.
Cheques and P.O.'s payable to—

F. HODGSON & SON, Manufacturers, Importers, and Merchants, **WOODSLEY ROAD, LEEDS.**

N.B.—No Agents Appointed.

SATIN POLISH

FOR LADIES' AND CHILDREN'S BOOTS AND SHOES, BAGS, TRUNKS, HARNESS, &c.

HIGHEST AWARDS WHEREVER EXHIBITED.

AMERICAN MAGIC BRONZE

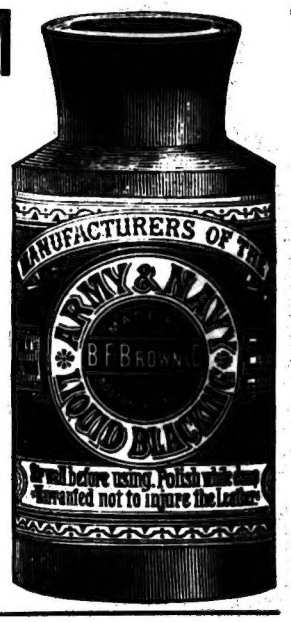
Gives to Old Boots and Shoes, Ornaments, &c., the appearance of New.

WHITE AND BLACK CREAMS

For improving all kinds of Patent Leather and Glace Kid.

SATIN BROWN CREAM

FOR BROWN AND RUSSIAN LEATHER, BOOTS AND SHOES, &c.



FOR GENTLEMEN'S BOOTS.

USE

ARMY & NAVY LIQUID BLACKING

Gives a Brilliant Jet Black Polish quickly.

SOLD EVERYWHERE.

BLANKETS! BLANKETS!!

PUBLIC OPINION

has declared most emphatically all over

THE BRITISH ISLES

that the

BLANKETS

of the

FLEECE MANUFACTURING CO.

are the Very Best Value in

THE WORLD.

Absolutely Incomparable and quite Peerless. Imitated often, Equalled never.

IT IS A STARTLING FACT

that

FOR THREE HALF-CROWNS (7s. 6d.)

Every reader of "Pearson's Xmas No." will get one pair Fine All Wool Fleecy Blankets, guaranteed pure and free from filling; 5lb. weight. Size about 80in. by 60in. Usually sold in shops at 13s. Perfectly marvellous value. Carriage paid, 1s. per pair extra.

FOR ONE GOLDEN GUINEA, (21s.)

Every reader will get two pairs (make no mistake, *two pairs, not one*) of beautiful Superfine All Wool Fleecy Blankets, PURE. Full size, 90in. by 70in.; 7lb. weight. Sold in shops at 15s. per pair. Really extraordinary value. Carriage paid, 1s. per pair extra.

Everybody delighted. Money returned willingly if satisfaction is not given. Hundreds of most flattering testimonials received along with the repeat orders.

By buying all your blankets here you save

50% CLEAR PROFIT.

The reason we can give the public such extraordinary value is that where others sell a pair we are constantly selling scores and scores.

All our goods guaranteed pure and free from all filling, cotton, or stiffening.

Though we are constantly sending blankets all over

THE UNITED KINGDOM

we have not had ONE SINGLE COMPLAINT either in price or quality. All goods despatched same day. Write at once for a few pairs before

IT IS TOO LATE.

WARNING.

The F. M. Co. warn the public that low-priced inferior goods are constantly being offered, which goods in most cases are half cotton and very much filled with all kinds of stuff, and the public may take it that the blankets of the F.M.Co. are sold at the very bottom prices, and nobody can sell pure all wool Blankets at any lower prices, or even as low.

NOTE.—Our only address is

FLEECE MANUFACTURING CO.,
CAN HALL MILLS,
HASLINGDEN, LANC.
(Mention this paper.)

THE "EXCELSIOR" SILVER WATCH, 19s.

Wonderful timekeeper, strong well made, six jewels, genuine silver cases, genuine written warranty, lady's or gent's, sent free, registered, for 19s. A month's trial allowed. **Compare this Watch** with those advertised as worth £3. IT IS FAR SUPERIOR. Full particulars of this and every possible kind of watch in our SPLENDID CATALOGUE elegantly illustrated, with 1,000 engravings (post free), containing also, "HOW TO CHOOSE A WATCH." SPECIAL ENGLISH LEVER, £1 10s. The "KNOCKABOUT WATCH," 7s. 6d. KEYLESS ditto, 9s. 6d.

DO NOT BUY JEWELLERY AT A SHOP.

Send direct to the Manufacturers. Birmingham supplies the world with Jewellery. 800 engravings in our catalogue of Rings, Chains, Brooches, &c., also Electro-plate and Cutlery.

NO OLD-FASHIONED EXTRAVAGANT PRICES.

WATCH CLUBS.—Managers who have had experience of the inferior goods usually considered good enough for Watch Clubs by other firms, should apply for particulars.

G. LANGDON DAVIES & CO.,
Belgrave Bldgs., Bristol St., Birmingham.

SWEET WEDDING BELLS.

SWEET WEDDING BELLS.

THE MOST FASCINATING PARLOUR GAME.

1/-

SWEET WEDDING BELLS.

Obtainable of all Stationery and Fancy Dealers. Patent No. 5482.

ONE BOX OF CLARKE'S B 41 PILLS

is warranted to cure all discharges from the Urinary Organs in either sex (acquired or constitutional), Gravel, and pains in the Back. Guaranteed free from Mercury. Sold in Boxes, 4s. 6d. each, by all Chemists and Patent Medicine Vendors throughout the World; or sent to any address for 60 stamps by the Makers,

THE LINCOLN & MIDLAND COUNTIES DRUG Co., LINCOLN

WATCH CLUBS.

Foremen and others desirous of advancing the interests of their fellow-workmen and themselves should write for Catalogue (1,000 illustrations) and full particulars, which may be had from

H. E. PECK,

CITY OF LONDON WATCH COMPANY,

NEW BRIDGE STREET, LUDGATE CIRCUS, E.C.

"THRO' THE BATTLE SMOKE."

Pearson's Library.—No. 3.

A COMPLETE NOVEL—PROFUSELY ILLUSTRATED.

Published on 1st December.—Price Sixpence.

OF ALL BOOKSELLERS.

THE MOST USEFUL PRESENT

IS A DOZEN OF

ROBINSON AND CLEAVER'S

IRISH CAMBRIC HANDKERCHIEFS.

Ladies' Bordered, 2/3 to 10/9 per doz.; Gents', 3/3 to 16/6 per doz.
Do. Hemstitched, 2/9 to 25/- " Do. 3/11 to 45/- "

SAMPLES AND PRICE LISTS POST FREE.

ROBINSON & CLEAVER, Manufacturers to the Queen, &c., &c. **BELFAST.**

"Yes, I flatter myself that I can improve matters in that direction," was the reply. "My house is quite close, and I will run over and fetch you a draught. You are, of course, aware that the ague is of an intermittent character, recurring every other day till it subsides?"

"I know it only too well," replied Captain Hawke. "I shall be as fit as a fiddle to-morrow, probably only to relapse the next day into another of these attacks. I do not know how you are situated domestically, Doctor, but I was wondering whether you could take me in and look after me for a few days, till I get over this bout. I am nervous about myself, and without any disparagement to the hospitality of our friend here, I should feel happier under medical supervision."

Doctor Youle's hungry mouth showed by its eager twitching that the prospect of a resident patient, even for a day or two, was by no means distasteful to him. "I shall be only too pleased to look after you," he said. "I shall be much occupied to-morrow—rather unpleasantly employed as a witness at an inquest—but, as you say, you will most likely be feeling better then, and not so much in need of my services. If you really wish the arrangement you had better have a closed fly, and come over at once. I will run on ahead, and prepare a draught for you."

The landlord, not best pleased with the abstraction of his guest, went to order a carriage, and a quarter of an hour later Captain Hawke, with his luggage, was driven to the Doctor's residence, a prim, red-brick house, in the middle of the sleepy High-street. Doctor Youle was waiting on the doorstep to receive his patient, and at once conducted him to a small back room on the ground floor, evidently the surgery.

"Drink this," he said, handing the invalid a glass of foaming liquid; "and then, if you will sit quietly in the easy chair while I see about your things, I don't doubt that I shall find you better. The effect is almost instantaneous."

But the Doctor himself could hardly have imagined to quite what an extent his words were to be realised. He had no sooner closed the door than Captain Hawke sprang to his feet, all trace of shivering gone, and applied himself to the task of searching the room. One wall was fitted with shelves laden with bottles containing liquids, and these obtained the eccentric invalid's first attention. Rapidly scanning the labels, he passed along the shelves, apparently without satisfying his quest, for he came to an end without putting his hand to bottle or jar.

Pausing for a moment to listen to the Doctor's voice in the distance directing the flyman with the luggage, he recommenced his search by examining a range of drawers that formed a back to the mixing dresser, and which, also systematically labelled, were found to contain dry drugs. Here, again, nothing held his attention, and he was turning away with vexed impatience on his face, when, at the very end of the row, and lower than the others, he espied a drawer ticketed "Miscellaneous."

Pulling it open, he saw that it was three parts filled with medicine corks, scarlet string, and sealing-wax, all heaped together in such confusion that it was impossible to take in the details of the medley at a glance. Removing the string and sealing-wax, the inquisitive Captain ran his fingers lightly through the bulk of the corks, till they closed on some hard substance hidden from view. When he withdrew his hand it held a small package, which, after one flash of eager scrutiny, he transferred to his pocket."

Even now, however, though he drew a long breath of relief, it seemed that the search was not yet complete; for, after carefully rearranging and closing the drawer, he tried the door of a corner cupboard—only to find it locked. He had just drawn a bunch of peculiar-looking keys from his pocket, when the voice of the doctor bidding the flyman a cheery "Good-day," caused him to glide quietly back to the arm-chair. The next moment his host entered, rubbing his hands and smiling professionally.

"Your mixture has done wonders, doctor," the Captain said. "I am another man already, and my experience tells me that I am safe for another forty-eight hours. By the way, I was so seedy when they hauled me out of the train that I don't even know where I am. What place is this?"

"This is Beechfield, in Buckinghamshire, about an hour from town," said the Doctor. "An old-fashioned county centre, you know."

"Beechfield, by Jove!" exclaimed Captain Hawke, with an air of mingled surprise and pleasure. "Well, that is a curious coincidence, for an old friend of my father's lives, or lived, somewhere about here, I believe—General Lascelles; do you know him?"

"Yes, I know the General," replied Dr. Youle, a little absently; then added, "he has a nice little place called 'The Elms,' a hundred yards or so beyond the top of the High-street."

"Well, I feel so much better that I will stroll out and see the general," said Hawke. "Will you kindly show me your front door, and point out the direction I should take to reach 'The Elms'?"

Dr. Youle led the way out of the room. The Captain followed him into the passage for a few paces, then, with an exclamation about a forgotten handkerchief, darted back into the surgery, and quick as lightning undid the catch that fastened the window, being at his host's heels again almost before the latter had noticed his absence. In another minute, duly instructed in the route, he started, walking swiftly through the shadows of the early winter twilight towards the end of the town.

But apparently the immediate desire to visit his "father's old friend" had passed away. Taking the first by-way that ran at right angles to the High Street, he passed thence into a lane that brought him to the back of Dr Youle's house, where he disappeared among the foliage of the garden. It was a long three-quarters of an hour before he crept cautiously into the lane again, and even then "The Elms" was not his first destination. Not till he had paid two other rather lengthy visits—one of them to the Beechfield chemist—did he find himself ushered into the presence of General and Miss Lascelles. A distinguished-looking young man, dressed, like father and daughter, in deep mourning, was with them in the fire-lit library, and evinced an equal agitation on the entrance of Dr Youle's resident patient. The conversation, however, did not turn on byegone associations and mutual reminiscences. Miss Lascelles sprang forward with outstretched hands and glistening eyes.

"Oh, Mr Poignand!" she cried. "I can see that you have news for us—good news, too, I think?"

"Yes," was the reply, "I hold the real murderer of Leonard Furnival in the hollow of my hand—which means, of course, that the other charge is demolished."

Dr. Youle, who was a bachelor, had ordered his cook to prepare a dainty little repast in honour of the guest, and as the dinner hour approached and "the Captain" did not return he began to get anxious about the fish. On the stroke of seven, however, the front door bell rang and the laggard was admitted, looking so flushed and heated that, when they were seated in the cosy dining-room, the Doctor ventured on a remonstrance.

"I have been interested," was the explanation, "very deeply interested by what I heard at the Lascelles' about this poisoning case—so much so that I was obliged to stay and hear it out. It seems that the stuff employed was *tanghin*—the poison which the natives of Madagascar use in their trials by ordeal. Have you ever seen a trial by ordeal, Doctor?"

It was the host's turn now to be bored by the subject. He shook his head absently, and passed the sherry decanter.

"It is an admirable institution for keeping down the population," persisted the other. "Whenever a man is suspected of a crime he has to eat half a dozen of these berries, on the supposition that if he is innocent they will do him no harm. Needless to say, the poison fails to discriminate between the stomachs of good and bad men, and the accused is always proved guilty. It must be a terrible thing to be proved guilty when you are innocent, Dr. Youle."

Some change of tone caused the Doctor to look up and catch his guest's eye. The two men stared steadily at each other for the space of ten seconds; then the Doctor winced a little and said: "What have I to do with Madagascar poisons and innocent men? *Tanghin* is hardly known in this country, and cannot be procured at the wholesale druggists. I have never even seen it."

The sound of a bell, ringing somewhere in the kitchen premises, reaches them, and Poignand pushed his chair back from the table as he replied:

"Not even seen it, eh? Strange, then, that a supply of the berries and a tincture distilled from them should have been discovered in that corner cupboard in your surgery. Strange, too, that a box of the Zagury capsules, in which vehicle the poison was administered to Leonard Furnival, should have been found among your medicine corks, stamped with the rubber stamp of Hollings, the Beechfield chemist, though he swears he never supplied you with any capsules.

"Stranger still that Hollings should remember—now that it has been called to his mind—your apparent aimless lingering in his shop on the day before the death, and the fidgety movements, now revealed as the legerdemain by which you substituted your poisoned packet for the one the chemist had lying ready on the counter, against Mr. Harry Furnival's call. It is no use Dr. Youle; you would have been wiser to have destroyed such fatal evidences. Your wicked sacrifice of a valuable life, in order to prove your mistaken treatment right, at the expense of your successful rival, is as clear as noonday. Ah! here is the Inspector."

As he spoke, two or three men entered the room, and one of them—the detective who had been detailed to watch Harry Furnival—quietly effected the arrest. The wretched culprit, broken down completely by Mark Poignand's unofficial "bluff," blustered a little at first, but quickly weakened, and saved further trouble by a full admission almost on the exact lines of the accusation. Knowing, by his previous observation, and from the question asked him by Harry, that Leonard Furnival was in the habit of taking the patent capsules, he had bought a box in London, and, after replacing the original contents with poison, had watched his chance to change the boxes. His motive was to injure and put in the wrong the rising young practitioner who had supplanted him, and, whose toxicological knowledge, by a curious irony of fate, was the first link in the chain of detection. The tanghin berries he had procured from a firm of Madagascar merchants by passing himself off as the representative of a well-known wholesale druggist, who, at the trial, disclaimed all knowledge of him, and all dealings in the fatal drug.

Poignand's working out of the case was regarded as masterly; but he knew very well that unless he had started on the pre-supposition of Youle's guilt, he should never have come upon the truth. When he got back to the office he went straight through to the inner room, where the shrunken red-turbaned figure was playing with the cobras by the fire.

"Now, tell me, how did you suspect the doctor?" asked Poignand, after outlining the events which had led to a successful issue.

"Sahib," said Kala Persad, gravely; "what else was there of hatred, of injury, of revenge, in the story the pretty Missee Mem Sahib told. Where there is a wound on the black heart of man, there is the place to look for crime."

This Series of Detective Stories by Headon Hill will be continued in the ordinary issue of Pearson's Weekly, published on Saturday, November 24th.

Printed and published by C. Arthur Pearson, at Pearson's Weekly Buildings, Henrietta Street, London, W.C.

By Authority of Her Majesty the Queen, Empress of India

UNDER FIFTEEN BRITISH AND COLONIAL PATENTS, SEVEN AMERICAN AND CONTINENTAL PATENTS.

"CALIFORNIAN"

THE "HOUSEHOLD TREASURE" BORAX.

Concentrated, Specially Prepared, Absolutely Pure, Absolutely Safe, for Personal and Domestic Uses.

"MATCHLESS PURIFIER." "ABSOLUTELY CERTAIN IN ACTION." "FAULTLESS ANTISEPTIC."

This Borax possesses qualities that are exceptional and unknown to any other substance. It stands alone in its Antiseptic, Decay-Arresting, Purifying attributes, and its safety. It Purifies Water, destroys Baccili, Animalculæ, and Fever Germs instantly. Renders Water beautifully clear, sweet, pure, and soft for all Washing, Cleaning, Purifying, and Scouring purposes; especially valuable for Toilet, Bath, and Lavatory. Removes all taint, all mustiness, dry rot, or other decomposition; makes all domestic wares bright, clean, and sweet. Keeps Milk pure and sweet, as well as Fresh Meat, Poultry, Game, and Fish, destroys all sourness, removes all taint, prevents waste at once, preserving and improving at same time the untainted parts. Unrivalled for Washing Vegetables and for Cooking purposes. Wherever "Californian" is used it sweetens, purifies, and improves. By dusting the skin with "Californian" and rinsing the clothing in "Californian" Water all infectious germs are destroyed. Infection cannot spread where "Californian" is used. "Californian" is sold in Packets, **6d.**, **3d.**, and **1d.** each. Household Directions and valuable Toilet Recipes on each Packet.

The safety of "Californian" raises its value far above that of all other Antiseptics, its cheapness places it out of the range of competition, its certainty of action renders it UNIQUE. It cannot stain, corrode, poison, or do the slightest injury in any way.

The immense importance of "Californian" in the Sick Room, and its value to Nurses, is fully described by "Sister Eva," Certified Surgical and Medical Nurse, in an eight-page pamphlet.

This pamphlet should be read by all Nurses and by all Mothers; its information is new and cannot be over-rated, and it will be sent post paid free to any Lady or Nurse on receipt of Address.

"Californian," in addition to its registered title and label, is also further known by this special Trade Mark, registered and recognised as the standard brand of Borax purity throughout the civilised world.

"Californian" and Patent Borax preparations are sold in packets, convenient and ready for instant use at home, on land, on water, in all climates.

The greatest boon conferred by our Queen has been the recognition of these preparations—suited as well for the home of the cottage housewife as for the mansion of Her Majesty, and the comfort of civilised persons everywhere.

Dirt, Stains, Spots, Specks, Rust, Mould, Sourness, and Decay instantly removed from Household Requisites, Breakfast, Dinner, Tea-things, Dessert and Supper Services, Glasses, Dishes, Plates, Spoons, Knives, Forks, Cooking Vessels, and all other Domestic Articles, Paint, Floors, Stairs, Tables, Baths, Woodwork, Windows, easily Cleansed, Washed, Kept Bright, Pure, and Sweet by Patent Borax preparations.

Recent Exhibition Awards:—Australia: Tasmania Gold and Bronze Medals, 1892. America: Chicago, 3 Diplomas, "for originating a new branch of industry," and for Borax Soaps, Antiseptic Preparations, &c., 1893. Manchester: Diploma and Gold Medal, 1894. Belgium: Antwerp, Diplôme d'Honneur and Medal, 1894.

Highest Award wherever Exhibited.

The most convenient Soap for daily use in the Household is Soap in fine powder, sold in packets, and the best of this class is

"BORAX EXTRACT OF SOAP."

"THE DIRT EXTRACTOR." "PERFECTION" OF PACKET SOAP.

UNDER HER MAJESTY'S ROYAL PATENT.

Hardest Water it purifies instantly. Dirt it extracts immediately. Cleansing it accomplishes thoroughly. Purifying it carries out perfectly—and produces "linen white as snow, sweet as new-mown hay." In Quarter-Pound, Half, and Pound Packets. Directions on each. This Soap being in finely-prepared powder can be used in an instant, as it dissolves immediately in hot or warm, and quickly even in cold water. It is thus very handy and convenient for daily use, as it washes without rubbing, while it is unrivalled for disinfecting purposes.

"BORAX STARCH GLAZE."

The Patent Flexible Enamel for Starched Goods, in fine Powder, Ready for Using instantly with every kind of Starch.

Wonderfully improves every description of Starch, imparts Enamel-like Gloss, gives Permanent Stiffness, Brilliancy, and Beauty to Muslin, Lace, Linen, Cuffs, Collars, Fronts, and all other Starched Articles. It is merely stirred into the Starch while mixing; gives no trouble. In packets, 1d. and 3d., boxes, 6d. Directions on each.

"Boraxaline" for the Bath, "Soluble" Borax, "Beauty" Borax, "Beauty" Soap, "Beauty" Tooth Powder, "Beauty" Toilet Powder, Borax "Electric" Voice Crystals, Borax Brilliant Blue, Borax Dry Soap, New Patent Borax in Jars, and "Californian" Borax Preparations for Household, Laundry, and Toilet Purposes, are sold by Grocers, Soap Dealers, and at Stores in every civilised community.

Borax "Beauty" Book, 33 illustrations in Chromo colours, with facsimile letters from eminent ladies, List of Toilet Preparations, and useful Toilet information, post free, by naming *Pearson's*, direct from the

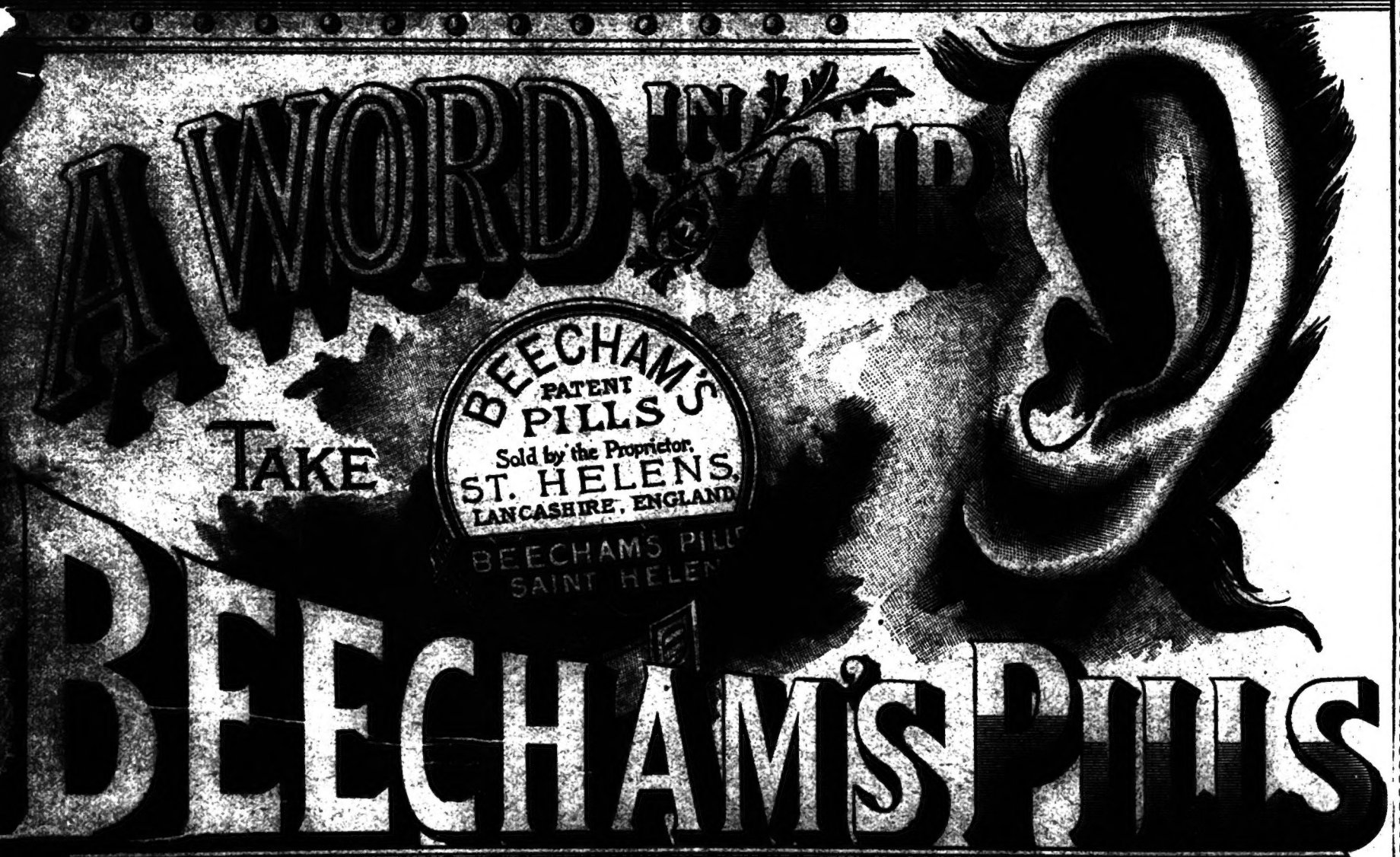
PATENT BORAX CO., Limited, Sole Makers, Works, Ladywood, Birmingham.

SERGEANT WILLIAM SULLIVAN.

An Impossible Motion.

***SERGEANT WILLIAM SULLIVAN** is up to something, he is up to the wall, upright to the wall, right up to the upright wall. It is a queer position for a real live sergeant, it looks a painful one, but he does not show his face—that would tell a tale. He is laughing, although he is straining every nerve to keep his equilibrium. It is not because Sergeant Sullivan is a giddy man that he makes this attempt to lean sideways straight up to the wall. Neither does he try it because there is no convenient lamp-post to embrace. The fact is he was offered Five Pounds if he could do it, and, as the picture shows, he attained the desired position, but he didn't obtain the desired prize, for we were inquisitive and found out the Old Soldier dodge. He had a nail on his finger—an iron one—and driven into the wall. That wasn't in the piece, so Sergeant Sullivan retired, and he says, "You can't pull the breeches off a Highlander, and you can't do that; it's an impossible motion." Now, readers, the proprietor of Beecham's Pills invites you and all your friends to place your right side right up to an upright wall, every portion of your side from ankle to the shoulder being in contact with the wall. Then attempt to raise the left foot from the ground while the right side of the body is still in contact with the wall. If there is no fun to be got out of this experiment, you are in a bad way, and we feel it our bounden duty to remind you that for ensuring buoyant spirits, and the capacity to enjoy life to the full, Beecham's Pill's are*

Worth a Guinea a Box.



If you have already tried "BEECHAM'S PILLS," you cannot do better than put a word in your friend's ear. The proprietor does not buy, or publish testimonials. "BEECHAM'S PILLS" recommend themselves, or they would not be the most popular medicine after 50 years' trial.